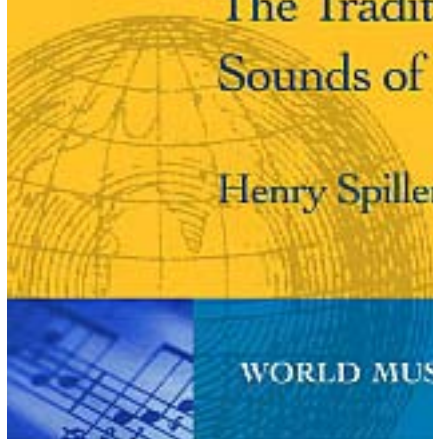




# Gamelan

The Traditional  
Sounds of Indonesia

Henry Spiller



WORLD MUSIC SERIES

# *Gamelan*

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# Gamelan

## *The Traditional Sounds of Indonesia*



HENRY SPILLER

A B C  C L I O

*Santa Barbara, California   Denver, Colorado   Oxford, England*

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10. “Lindeuk Japati,” Tati Saleh

*For additional information on each track, see the Listening Guide.*



## *Series Foreword*

When Philip Bohlman, professor of ethnomusicology at the University of Chicago, and Alicia Merritt, acquisitions editor at ABC-CLIO, first approached me in 1998 to ask if I would serve as editor for a new series of books on world music traditions, the prospect excited me greatly.

At that time, the monumental, ten-volume *Garland Encyclopedia of World Music* was on the verge of publication. Several academic publishers, including the University of Chicago Press, had developed extensive and impressive ethnomusicology lists. A handful of quality textbooks designed for introductory world music survey courses were already available, and a few other promising ones on the way. In short, in conjunction with the dramatic rise in the overall popularity of world music (a subject to which I will return), the related literature was growing rapidly and expanding on several different fronts all at once.

But for all of this growth and expansion in ethnomusicology and world music publishing, one special kind of book remained surprisingly rare: the accessible yet substantive introductory text on a specific world music region or area—and this was exactly the kind of book to which ABC-CLIO was now proposing to devote a series. I therefore enthusiastically accepted their series editorship invitation.

As I had expected, my enthusiasm for a series of such books on the world's diverse musical cultures and traditions was widely shared by my colleagues in the ethnomusicology/world music studies community. In short order, several leading experts, most of them teaching at major research universities with leading ethnomusicology programs (University of Chicago, University of Pennsylvania, University of Florida), were under contract to contribute volumes in their respective areas of expertise. This was a Dream Team of scholars, but even more importantly, these were highly gifted authors who were up to the series mission challenge that ABC-CLIO and I set before them: Write a book that is accessible to the non-specialist reader, that is highly informative without being overly technical, that is brought vividly to life by its illustrations and accompanying compact disc (CD), that conveys your own passion for the music it explores and the world in which that music

lives, and that will engage the interest of a wide readership comprised principally of high school and undergraduate nonmusic students.

Beyond these requirements, the authors were asked to conceive of their works in accordance with a structured yet flexible model that directed each book through a telescopic progression from broadly general to increasingly specific vantage points, starting with a general introduction to the selected music area and topic covered, then moving to a more narrowly defined regional focus and an emphasis on key themes and issues, and finally concluding with an in-depth portrait of a particular musical community or phenomenon, a portrait based on the author's own principal field research. The model was developed with three specific objectives in mind: achieving a high level of consistency of presentation between volumes, striking of an appropriate balance between comprehensive breadth and focused depth within each volume, and engendering in readers an intimate sense of personal engagement with the music and its world. It has been highly satisfying for me as series editor to see these objectives splendidly realized in each volume to date.

Underlying the concept and vision of this series since its inception have been two important issues: the dramatic ascent of world music in recent years and the rather paradoxical term "world music" itself. Since these issues in a sense prefigured and continue to shape the ABC-CLIO World Music Series vision, I would like to devote the remainder of this foreword to a brief discussion of their significance.

### **The Dramatic Rise of "World Music"**

The popularity of world music has grown by leaps and bounds here in the West in recent decades. It was not so long ago that the sounds of Indian sitars, Indonesian gamelans, Chinese pipas, and the like were largely unknown to the vast majority of Western listeners. Today, such sounds are to be heard just about everywhere: on the radio, on the Internet, in record stores, at concerts and festivals, even in shopping malls, supermarkets, and elevators. Whether or not you know to identify the source of the distinctive, "otherworldly" melody on your favorite Beatles or Ricky Martin CD as a sitar, it is there, permeating your consciousness and affecting your musical sensibilities. And that infectious Janet Jackson dance groove? Perhaps it's the one enlivened by a heavily processed, digitally sampled Balinese gamelan orchestra. Then,

of course, there is the Internet, where thousands upon thousands of world music recordings and “sound file” sources are available at the click of a mouse to everyone, from major record producers and dance club DJs to soccer moms and teenage computer hackers.

Some of the musical traditions that fall within the eclectic domain of world music represent continuations and developments of musical practices and repertoires dating back centuries or even millennia, such as Indian *raga* and Japanese *gagaku*. Others, such as “world beat” and various cross-cultural fusion genres, are of recent origin or are emerging at this very moment, as music makers blend together resources, ideas, and musical materials from a variety of sources and inventively forge them into new expressions of their unique identities as individuals, as members of communities, societies, and cultures, and as human beings in the broadest sense of the term. All points on this spectrum are embraced within the pages of each volume of the ABC-CLIO World Music Series.

But what exactly *is* world music? There is no easy answer to this question. In actuality, *all* of the world’s music traditions, or *musics*, as ethnomusicologists like to call them—past and present, traditional and modern, familiar and unfamiliar, Western and non-Western, classical and popular, folk and tribal—should rightly fall within the category of world music. Since all of the world’s musics exist in the world, it makes sense that either all of them should be categorized as world music or that none of them should be. Any scheme that includes some musics within the category while excluding others is simply arbitrary.

And yet the popular meaning of the term “world music” is just that: arbitrary. It rose to prominence as a convenient catch-all classification for types of music that did not fit conveniently into existing Western categories (jazz, rock, classical, etc.) and was subsequently embraced by bewildered record store owners seeking an appropriate designation for bins displaying such material. The “world music” category, as it is usually applied, includes only those musics that do not fit within the conventional categorical boxes that identify the Western musical “mainstream” (another slippery and ever-malleable term that today encompasses, among other musics, classical, jazz, rock, country and western, easy listening, rap, and hip-hop). Traditional musics of African, Asian, Aboriginal Australian, Native American, Central and South American, and Eastern European cultures are the prime candidates for inclusion. Western-influenced popular music styles built upon the roots of traditional musics of non-Western origin are also usually in-



cluded, sometimes under the aforementioned subcategory of world beat. And certain musical traditions of North America and Western Europe—Irish traditional, Cajun, and so on—fit the bill of world music according to some people's lists but not others'.

The philosophy underlying the ABC-CLIO World Music Series, in step with current directions in the discipline of ethnomusicology and important recent publications such as *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music*, endeavors to move away from the arbitrary inclusions and exclusions that are so often invoked by the term "world music" and to approach the study of world music instead simply as an exploration of selected musical traditions from around the world, wherever that exploration may originate and wherever it may take the reader along its multidirectional pathways. The geographical and cultural "hubs" of given musics—the places identified with their origins, the principal cultural groups with which they are connected, the musicians recognized as their leading representatives—are most certainly accounted for, but so too are the complex, intersecting webs of geography and culture that situate these musics in more broadly global, that is, in *world*, contexts.

Thus, for example, Philip Bohlman's volume on music and European nationalism privileges neither rural Eastern European folk music nor concert works by the well-known nineteenth-century Czech composer Antonin Dvorak one over the other, devoting serious attention to both; Carol Muller highlights the inextricable ties between indigenous Zulu musical traditions, Christian hymnody, and the global configuration of the modern popular music industry in her book on South African music; and Henry Spiller finds an essential continuity between the centuries-old tradition of Javanese *gamelan* music, on the one hand, and the Western pop music-inspired Islamic didacticism of the Indonesian *dangdut* genre on the other. In all cases, the concept of world music is treated by these authors not as an invitation to divide the world up in West-versus-the-rest style, but as a point of departure from which to explore musical traditions both at their most localized levels of identity and within the context of broad, overarching processes of globalization and modernization.

It is a great pleasure to bring this exciting series to your attention. I hope you enjoy reading these books as much as I have.

Michael B. Bakan  
Series Editor

# Preface

What are the “traditional sounds” of Indonesia? Ever since contact between the Indonesian archipelago and the West began many centuries ago, the Western imagination has been captivated by the region’s seemingly endless supply of exotic, even miraculous, things—spices, coffee, and rubber; orangutans and Komodo dragons; the name of the mysterious spy Matahari (“matahari” means “sun” in Indonesian; its literal translation is “eye of the day”) and a convenient word to describe lunatic behavior (“running *amok*”); unusual social practices ranging from matrilineal descent reckoning and headhunting to tooth-filing and ritual homosexual acts; the list goes on and on. Is it any wonder that the West expects—even demands—that “traditional” Indonesian music be similarly exotic? And in many cases it is. Westerners have long found the bronze percussion ensemble music of Java and Bali—*gamelan* music—to meet and exceed expectations of exoticism.

It has been almost thirty years since I first heard the exotic sounds of a gamelan ensemble emanating from somewhere in the performing arts building at the University of California at Santa Cruz, where I was a first-year music major. I was sitting in an ear-training class, practicing singing and identifying intervals with my classmates, when all of a sudden an unearthly, ponderous, utterly unidentifiable noise penetrated the walls. It wasn’t particularly loud, but it was quite distinctive and strangely compelling; it certainly made a startling contrast with the weak singing sounds my fellow students and I were making. “It sounds like they got the gamelan going,” the teacher commented, and I wondered to myself, “what on earth could a gamelan be?”

I made it a point to search out the room in which this strange thing was kept, where I discovered that a “gamelan” was a collection of strange-looking percussion instruments. (Somehow, I knew instinctively that the term referred to the whole collection of instruments; I never asked the question I have since heard countless first-timers ask—“which one is the gamelan?”) Unlike the musical instruments to which I was accustomed, such as pianos and guitars, with their neat symmetry and manufactured perfection, there was a sort of Fred Flintstone qual-

ity about these gamelan instruments—each key and pot was irregularly shaped and sized and attached to the intricately hand-carved stands with uneven nails or rustic-looking ropes. The golden metal from which the keys and pots were made seemed to glow mysteriously. I found the whole package to be invitingly inscrutable; it looked timelessly ancient, mystical, and most definitely exotic.

While I thought the gamelan was quite fascinating, I didn't succumb to its exotic appeal until many months later, when I discovered that a number of fellow students with whom I wanted to be friends played in the University's gamelan ensemble. I didn't realize it at the time, but socializing is also the motivation for many Indonesians who become involved in playing gamelan music. Of course, gamelan instruments don't strike Indonesians as particularly exotic, nor do they find the sounds unfamiliar or strange, but since Indonesians tend to value gregariousness, they often find themselves attracted to the social aspects of playing gamelan.

The parts I learned were not really very difficult, and at first I quickly became bored with them. It gradually dawned on me, however, that the most important question to ask when I learned a new part was not "how interesting can I make my own part?" but rather "how does my part affect all the others?" Over time, I began to conceive my role in the gamelan ensemble as somebody who "fits in" rather than somebody who "stands out."

Gamelan music of all sorts is about playing together with other people in a unified group in which mutual cooperation is rewarded with harmonious music. Expert gamelan musicians use their knowledge and skill not so much to stand out and shine in the group, but to blend seamlessly into the complex musical texture and make everybody shine—an approach to exerting power in all social interactions which Indonesians tend to value highly. I did not realize it at the time, but even from the very beginning of my involvement with gamelan music, the musical processes required to play it were retraining my body and mind to think and act in accordance with these values.

Thirty years later, gamelan music no longer sounds especially exotic to me. In fact, I can't imagine my own life without it. Studying gamelan has taken me around the world, introduced me to a host of fascinating people, and led me to hear and play music in new ways. It is humbling to realize that the musical processes that undergird gamelan music—the conventions and techniques by which it is conceived, composed,

played, and heard—have so profoundly formed and shaped my own personality and values. Of course, music and musical activities are among the most meaningful expressions human beings can produce—it should come as no surprise that the music we hear and play affects who we are, what we think, and how we perceive the world around us.

To my mind, what qualifies music as traditional is not how old it is, but rather how well it teaches, reinforces, and creates the social values of its producers and consumers. Traditional music is not something that is stuck in the past; it grows and changes, just as the people who make and listen to it grow and change, just as the values they share with those close to them change (albeit a bit more slowly). Truly traditional music, then, exploits new resources, acknowledges new requirements, and responds to new situations. Traditional music provides a place for people to try out new approaches to their existing values, to experiment with new ideas, and to synthesize the new with the old. Traditional music is rooted in trenchant musical processes—the general ideas about how people organize their musical activities—but is not limited to particular musical instruments, sounds, or repertoires.

It is my hope that this introductory exploration of the musical processes that characterize Indonesian gamelan music (and, in many ways, Southeast Asian music in general) will provide readers with some insights into how music molds individuals and societies; how musical values create, teach, reinforce, and even alter social values; and how musical change is an index of social change. It is easy to forget, amidst the buying and selling of commercial recordings, each of which is the perfected production of superhumanly “talented” artists and advanced technological magic, that musical processes—the doing and sharing of musical activities—have profound meaning and power.

The book begins in Chapter One by describing some Southeast Asian musical processes; these processes are, I argue, particularly Southeast Asian because they are intimately related to Southeast Asian geography and history. Chapter Two discusses a sampling of gamelan ensembles and repertoires on the Indonesian islands of Java and Bali, all of which bring those musical processes to bear on different social systems with different values. Chapters Three and Four focus on Sundanese music and dance from the western third of the island of Java. Chapter Three presents two rather different Sundanese gamelan ensembles (*gamelan salendro* and *degung*), their music, and their social contexts in some detail. At times these discussions present minute

technical details; these can be skimmed or skipped by readers more interested in the social and cultural side of gamelan music. Chapter Four explores the role of dance in Sundanese society and addresses issues of change, authenticity, and meaning in the performing arts of West Java; I argue that some of the most “traditional sounds” of Indonesia are those that do not necessarily fulfill the Western expectation of exoticism. Chapter Five revisits the musical processes introduced in Chapter One and reflects once again on what it means for music to be traditional in a changing world.

Out of necessity, this book includes many terms in several foreign languages. Since there are quite a few words in various Indonesian languages, it is worth taking a moment to mention a few salient facts about some of these languages. Virtually all Indonesians speak the Indonesian national language (called *bahasa Indonesia*, which English-speakers usually render as “Indonesian”). Most English speakers can pronounce Indonesian words passably well if they learn a few simple rules. Most of the consonants are pronounced more or less as they are in English, with the exception of ‘c,’ which is pronounced ‘ch,’ and ‘g,’ which is always hard, even when followed by an ‘e’ or an ‘i.’ Most Indonesian ‘r’ sounds are rolled (as in Spanish). Indonesians pronounce ‘a’ as English speakers do in the word “father,” ‘e’ as in “bed” (or sometimes as in “batter”), ‘i’ as in “pizza,” ‘o’ as in “poker,” and ‘u’ as in “dude.” If the same vowel appears two times in a row, it is pronounced twice with a glottal stop in between. An ‘h’ at the end of a word calls for an audible aspiration (forceful exhalation of breath); a ‘k’ at the end of a word is pronounced as a glottal stop.

Many Indonesians speak a regional language other than Indonesian among their families and friends, saving Indonesian for official situations or to speak to Indonesians from other parts of the country. The two most widely spoken regional languages in Indonesia are Javanese and Sundanese. Both of these languages have a few pronunciation peculiarities. Javanese distinguish between dental ‘d’ and alveolar ‘dh’ sounds; for the dental version, the tongue is right on the upper teeth, while for the alveolar version, the tongue is behind the upper teeth on the alveolar ridge, resulting in a slightly less explosive attack. Javanese make a similar distinction between dental ‘t’ and an alveolar ‘th’; a Javanese ‘th’ is not pronounced as in “the,” but rather more like the ‘th’ in the name “Esther.” Sundanese language includes a special vowel that is spelled ‘eu’ and pronounced like the ‘e’ in “the”; English speak-

ers are not used to saying this vowel except in unaccented syllables, and so find many Sundanese words difficult to pronounce. A Sundanese word that ends in a vowel is pronounced with a glottal stop at the end.

Indonesian, Javanese, and Sundanese (along with many other Southeast Asian languages) belong to the Austronesian language family, and share many words and grammatical constructions between them. They also have borrowed many words from the languages of other cultures with whom they have come into contact, including Sanskrit, Arabic, Portuguese, Dutch, and English. Americans are frequently amused to come across an Indonesian word that has clearly been borrowed from English, but whose pronunciation and spelling have changed.

One common feature that many English speakers find startling about Austronesian languages is that they often make no adjustment to a noun to indicate whether it is singular or plural. Thus, the word *gamelan* might mean “one bronze percussion orchestra” or “many bronze percussion orchestras.” Native speakers rely on the word’s context in a sentence to figure out the meaning. Readers of this book will also have to rely on context, too; a sentence beginning with “the gamelan is” obviously is about one gamelan, while “the gamelan are” is clearly about more than one gamelan.

If this book is at all successful in achieving its aims, I share that success with countless individuals who have helped me along the way. I am especially grateful for the friendship, help, support, and instruction that two remarkable Sundanese musicians living in the United States—Undang Sumarna and Burhan Sukarma—have lavished on me over the years. My teachers and friends in West Java during my visits there (and their visits to the United States) have generously shared with me their knowledge and feelings about Sundanese music and dance. Otong Rasta, Ade Komaran, Yus Yusdianawijaya, the late Entis Sutisna, and the late Tosin Mochtar each spent hours teaching, playing, and discussing music and dance with me. Members of two *lingkung seni*—the Bandung Zoo’s *ketuk tilu* group and The Rawit Group—made me feel welcome as I tagged along to their performances and made a general nuisance of myself. Others who took time to discuss their art with me include the late Abay Subardja, Enoch Atmadibrata, Sujana Arja, Irawati Durban Ardjo, the late Nugraha Sudiredja, Ana Mulyana, Nano S., Tjetjep Supriadi, Idjah Hadidjah, Euis Komariah, Hasibun Arief,

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# *Gamelan*



## Chapter 1

# Music and Southeast Asian History

Although this book's main focus is *gamelan* (bronze percussion orchestra) music in Indonesia, it is important to establish at the outset that neither the modern nation of Indonesia nor gamelan music developed in a vacuum. Indonesia is a conglomeration of islands, peoples, and cultures; its modern form is the result of a history that involves not only the lands and peoples within Indonesia, but the surrounding areas as well. Ensembles called gamelan are most often associated with the Indonesian islands of Java and Bali, but similar ensembles characterize the musical traditions of the entire region. This first chapter will explore the history of the whole of Southeast Asia to isolate a few musical processes—general ideas about how people organize musical activities—that underlie a great deal of music-making throughout the area, by investigating a selected sample of Southeast Asian musical traditions.

### **Southeast Asia**

Southeast Asia's position on a typical map of the world (see Figure 1.1) is deceiving: down in the lower right corner, it seems to be one of the most remote and marginal places on earth. From this satellite's-eye view, Southeast Asia appears as a misshapen peninsula trailing a chaotic mess of ungainly islands, sandwiched between the more geographically impressive landmasses of China (to the north), Australia (to the south), and India (to the West). Conventional maps of the world arbitrarily place Europe or North America at the center; this Eurocentric vantage makes it easy to dismiss Southeast Asia as an out-of-the-way, insignificant place.



*Figure 1.1. Map of the world (Southeast Asia circled)*

English-language histories, too, tend to be Eurocentric. They concentrate on the rise of civilization in Europe and the spread of European ideas throughout the world while ignoring the achievements of comparable civilizations in Asia, Africa, and the Americas. Such histories generally ignore the cultural accomplishments of Southeast Asian societies, which include the development of many neolithic technologies that contributed to cultural developments throughout the world. Southeast Asia's role in worldwide trading networks before the modern era, too, had far-reaching historical effects rarely acknowledged in modern histories (Lockard 1995:7–8). In modern times Southeast Asia has been ground zero for conflicts of world-dominating ideologies such as colonialism v. self-determination, capitalism v. communism, and minority rights v. nationalism. The integration of Southeast Asia into the world economy remains an issue of great global concern. That seemingly far-off region has long been, and likely will continue to be, a significant historical, political, and cultural force in the world.

Modern national boundaries in Southeast Asia reflect recent geopolitical realities more than long-standing cultural politics. Most Southeast Asian countries are ethnically heterogeneous; borders are often accidents of history and don't coincide with cultural spheres of influence. Virtually all Southeast Asian nations include a variety of cultural, ethnic, and language groups. Some significant ethnic groups, such as the Hmong in Laos and Thailand, have no nation to call their own. Countries in mainland Southeast Asia include Myanmar (formerly known as Burma), Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, and Vietnam. Southeast Asian island nations include Indonesia, the island city-state of Singapore, the tiny sultanate of Brunei, and the Philippines. Malaysia includes territory on the mainland as well as on the island of Borneo.

Significant geographic obstacles effectively separate Southeast Asia from the rest of the world—expansive, deep oceans (the 6-1/2-mile-deep Marianas trench off the coast of the Philippines is the deepest point in the ocean) mark the south and east boundaries, while some of the highest mountains in the world (the Himalayas) fence off the north and west. The land areas bounded by these natural limits share a hot, wet climate as well as an abundance of water and (once upon a time) thick rain forests. The major islands of Southeast Asia are separated only by shallow seas; as recently as 10,000 years ago, during the ice ages, when much of the world's water was bound up in glaciers, some of the larger islands were joined to mainland Southeast Asia by

land bridges; the result of this geographical past is a relatively uniform flora and fauna in the region (Cribb 2000:7–8).

In contrast, the peoples and cultures of modern Southeast Asia exhibit a staggering variety of languages and customs. The prehistory of the region is rife with waves of settlers from elsewhere, who brought with them markedly different physiognomies and language families. Sometimes the newcomers pushed the previous inhabitants into remote regions, but often they settled on top of existing cultures like sediments in a riverbed. Over the past few thousand years, influential religious missionaries and trade emissaries from India, China, and the Arab world came, followed by European colonial powers. Communities in various places adopted or developed sophisticated agricultural techniques and technologies. Great empires, whose rulers and subjects adhered to major world religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam, rose, conquered others, and fell, all the while adopting, adapting, and rejecting languages, ideas, and religions; all along, isolated communities cultivated their own idiosyncratic dialects and animistic religions. This great variety begs the question of whether it is sensible to speak of Southeast Asia as some kind of unit in human terms, despite its geographic unity.

The answer is yes, for two reasons. The first is precisely the common environment: Beset by similar environmental challenges, with access to similar resources, it is not surprising that different communities might adopt similar solutions to similar problems. The common exploitation of bamboo as a raw material and the ubiquitous cultivation of rice as a staple food are examples. The second reason is mutual contact among various Southeast Asian peoples and cultures. Different parts of Southeast Asia may be relatively remote to the rest of the world, but they are quite accessible to one another, especially those areas around rivers or bordering the shallow and easily navigable seas. Ideas, innovations, and inventions spread over the region through trade and maritime contact.

Historian Anthony Reid identifies several general social and cultural traits shared by many Southeast Asian cultures which are not characteristic of China and India: “the concept of spirit or ‘soul-stuff’ animating living things; the prominence of women in descent, ritual matters, marketing, and agriculture; and the importance of debt as a determinant of social obligation” (Reid 1988:6). Reid also isolates a few more specific practices and technologies shared by many Southeast Asian

cultures, including the use of a delicate finger knife to harvest rice, the popularity of cockfighting as a sporting pastime, and music played on bronze gongs (Reid 1988:6).

This book focuses on bronze gong music, especially on gong music from the Southeast Asian island of Java (one of the many islands that comprise the modern nation-state of Indonesia). The various music cultures of Southeast Asia (including those of Java) incorporate an astonishing variety of ensembles that feature bronze gongs, each one sounding quite different from the others. Nevertheless, they all share some fundamental characteristics. Examining the different musical “surfaces” that emerge when various cultures adopt and develop these shared fundamental music-making principles provides an entry point to an understanding of the general traits of Southeast Asian cultures as well as the historical, political, environmental, and social differences among them. To understand the principles of Southeast Asian music-making is to understand the peoples and cultures of Southeast Asia a bit better.

### Ecology, Culture, and Music

Southeast Asia’s environment has had great impact on its residents’ economies and ways of life. Ecology has also exerted an enormous direct impact on the region’s musical traditions. For example, many varieties of bamboo grow throughout the region, and Southeast Asian cultures have long exploited its unique qualities for many purposes, including making music. Bamboo is already hollow, simplifying the process of making wind instruments, such as flutes, from it. It is quite easy to work with; using simple cutting tools, it is simple to make a *jaw harp* (see Figure 1.2) by cutting a tongue out of a strip of bamboo, or even a simple string instrument by slitting “strings” from the bamboo’s skin and inserting sticks as “bridges” to tighten the strings. Musicologists generically call this kind of instrument an *idiochord tube zither* (see Figure 1.3). Bamboo’s naturally sonorous qualities also make it an ideal material for a variety of percussion instruments.

Wood is more difficult to manipulate than bamboo, but also provides the raw material for several kinds of musical instruments. Like bamboo, wood is naturally sonorous. A common Southeast Asian musical instrument consists of a series of tuned bamboo tubes or wooden





*Figure 1.2. Kubing (jaw harp) from the Philippines  
(Henry Spiller)*

slabs; the generic musicological term for this kind of instrument is *xylophone*. Some scholars have suggested that the xylophone was a Southeast Asian invention (Miller and Williams 1998:57).

Organic materials such as wood and bamboo deteriorate quickly in the hot, wet climate of Southeast Asia. Instruments made of readily available materials and requiring little investment of time to make, such as xylophones, jaw harps, and idiochord zithers, are well-suited to this environment because they are easy to replace when they disintegrate. Such instruments have been important components of Southeast Asian music cultures for probably thousands of years, and continue to be prominent in modern times.

Unlike wood and bamboo, bronze holds up quite well in the moist, steamy environment of Southeast Asia. In contrast to natural materials, bronze requires sophisticated technology and expensive raw materials to make and work, but once forged and shaped it is very durable. It is not entirely clear whether the idea for bronze smelting was independently invented in mainland Southeast Asia or imported from the north in China, but ever since a distinctly Southeast Asian bronze tradition developed approximately 3,000 years or so ago (Higham 1996:338), the metal has been regarded to have magical properties. Perhaps its durability contributed to bronze's perceived mystical power and great value. Among the implements early Southeast Asian bronzesmiths cre-



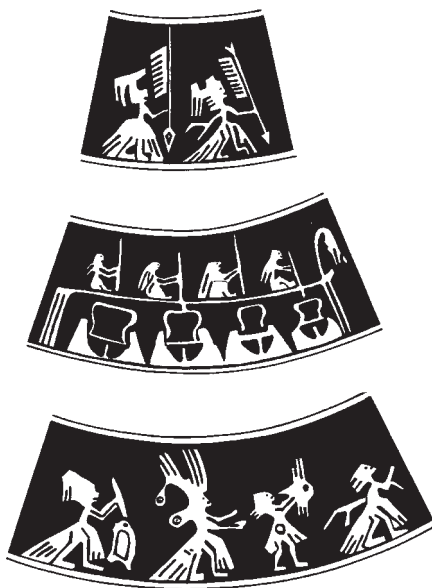
*Figure 1.3. Kalinga musician from the Philippines  
playing the idiochord tube zither called kolibit  
(courtesy Robert Garfias)*

ated were so-called bronze drums, which were undoubtedly sound-producing devices. Later, bronze became the raw material for a variety of percussion instruments, including gongs, gong chimes (a series of tuned gongs), and metallophones (a series of tuned metal bars).

The contrast between bamboo and bronze begins to illustrate a principle that will assume great significance in the following discussion of Southeast Asian music cultures: the principle of *layering*. Bamboo and bronze belong to distinct layers of material technology that reflect different layers of cultural influence as well. Bamboo represents the technology of the earliest inhabitants of Southeast Asia; direct descendants of these aboriginal peoples have been pushed into marginal areas of Southeast Asia and often maintain traditions different from those of subsequent invaders (Matusky 1998:594). Bamboo also represents the technology of the first proto-Malays who migrated southward from Taiwan into island Southeast Asia—the areas that are now the Philippines, Malaysia, and Indonesia—and the Southeast Asian mainland. These settlers also brought with them techniques of rice cultivation. Bamboo instruments often are associated with animist Southeast Asian ceremonies that are connected to agriculture and propitiating local spirits.

Bronze technology, on the other hand, first became manifest in mainland Southeast Asia, in what is now Thailand and Vietnam, associ-

ated with communities with intensive agriculture, relatively dense populations, and some social stratification. The resources and specialized skill required for bronze technology meant it was available only to the elite class. Bronze technology supplements, but does not supersede, bamboo technology; instruments made of bronze might sound different from instrument made of bamboo, but musicians play similar parts on them. They are different solutions brought to bear on the same musical problem: how to



produce musical instruments in an environment where everything rots quickly. But while bamboo music is often associated with agriculture, bronze instruments are more often associated with ceremonial music devoted to maintaining an orderly, hierarchical cosmos, as reflected in a social order with higher and lower classes. The expensive resources and specialized technology required for bronze reflect its greater social value and suggest not only a layering of cultural influences, but a layering of social classes as well.

Bronze-age Southeast Asian bronze drums (see Figure 1.4) provide an excellent illustration of class distinctions. The technical expertise involved in creating such finely-cast implements of such large size (some were as heavy as 200 lbs) suggests highly-specialized artisans working on behalf of upper-class patrons. The drums often are decorated with scenes of lavish rituals featuring musical instruments and elaborate costumes (Higham 1989). Whether the ceremonies were funerals, fertility rites, or celebrations of war victories, there is, according to archaeologist Charles Higham, little doubt that “participation in ceremonials was part of the aristocratic society” in Southeast Asia (Higham 1996:133).

But bronze technology did not remain limited to the upper classes of stratified societies; it long ago trickled down even to quite isolated cultures. On the island of Mindoro in the Philippines, for example, a



*Figure 1.4. Above: An assortment of early Southeast Asian bronze drums (photo and print collection of the Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde, Leiden, Netherlands).*

*Above left: Motifs from bronze drums showing musical activities (Charles Higham, *The Archaeology of Mainland Southeast Asia: From 10,000 B.C. to the Fall of Angkor*, Figure 4.10, p. 203. New York, 1989: Cambridge University Press.)*

small community of Hanunoo lives in the highland areas (into which they were long ago pushed by Tagalog and Bisayan farmers). While much of their music-making employs instruments made from wood and bamboo, they play bronze gongs in ensembles to enliven feasts and celebrations. These bronze gongs are acquired through trade with outsiders, and the Hanunoo consider them to be rare and valuable possessions (Maceda and Conklin 1955).

Very often both bronze and bamboo musical instruments bear names that imitate the sounds they make. The syllable “klung” in *angklung*, for example, captures the resonant quality of the bamboo rattling against the instrument’s frame as the player shakes it. The Malay term *gong* is possibly a vocal rendition of the low, ponderous, visceral sound of a large gong. Speakers of Sundanese, one of the regional languages of Java, take the onomatopoeia one step further: their word “goong”

includes two syllables on the “o” sound to imitate the undulating waves of sound that the best gongs produce. The Cambodian, Thai, Lao, and Burmese names for a thick pair of cymbals—*chhing*, *ching*, *sing*, and *sì*, respectively—are similarly onomatopoeic.

Subsequent cultural waves in Southeast Asia added more and more layers of technology for Southeast Asian musical instruments. Ideas from the civilizations of India found receptive audiences in the peoples and cultures of Southeast Asia; the developing upper classes especially saw great potential in the notions of social class and kingship that accompanied Hinduism. They adapted the Indian belief that reflecting the organization of the cosmos through a powerful intermediary—a “king” who resided in both worlds and represented an interface between them—would lead to better lives.

Very often the names of these new musical instruments betray their origins. Among the instruments depicted on Hindu monuments are plucked stringed instruments with box resonators; a variety of modern Southeast Asian plucked string instruments, including *kudyapi* from the Philippines, *kacapi* from West Java, *krajappi* from Thailand, and *hasapi* from Sumatra, have names derived from the same Sanskrit root, *kacchapa*, which can refer to a particular kind of tree (*cedrela toona*); Jaap Kunst notes that the South and Southeast Asian instruments that have related names are all string instruments made from wood (Kunst 1973:371). Laced drums, too, are probably imports from India (Miller and Williams 1998:66). Such instruments are not as well-suited to the environment as bamboo and bronze instruments, but their association with desirable Indic ideologies may make worthwhile the extra effort required to make and maintain them.

The Middle East—the source of Islam, one of Southeast Asia’s most successful imported religions—also contributed some new musical technologies. A Persian-Arabic bowed instrument called *rabab* is probably the prototype for various bowed spike fiddles with skin resonators with similar names in Southeast Asia. One of the names commonly given to frame drums (circular wooden frames with skins stretched across one side)—*rebana*—also reinforces the drum’s Islamic source; it is, perhaps, derived from the Arabic word “Rabbana,” which means “Our Lord!” and is the opening word for many short Arabic prayers (Kunst 1973:218).

European invaders also contributed musical instruments to Southeast Asian cultures. The violin (one of Europe’s most exportable musi-

cal inventions) has become entrenched in a number of Southeast Asian contexts, and retains its European name (*biyula*, *biola*). Brass bands, with their connotations of pomp and circumstance, have also found a home among various Southeast Asian peoples.

No matter which layer of cultural influence musical instrument prototypes or names come from, Southeast Asian musicians learned to deploy their instruments in their own ways. Many Southeast Asian music traditions share several fundamental and flexible approaches to structuring and performing music; these approaches may be characterized as *musical processes*. Musical processes are too abstract to be called specific techniques for making or playing music, yet they are not exactly music theory, either. They are, rather, basic paradigms for organizing musical materials at their most elemental levels, and they may result in surprisingly different musical sounds. And an entirely different manifestation of the principle of layers seems to underlie the Southeast Asian musical processes that govern music-making.

### **Southeast Asian Musical Processes**

Vocal music, which strictly speaking requires no technology at all, is a good starting place from which to explore Southeast Asian musical processes. Virtually all Southeast Asian cultures have rich traditions of vocal music, many of which involve the playing of musical instruments as well. There are some genres of song which are common to many Southeast Asian cultures, and these common genres persist through many historical layers of outside influences.

There are quite a few Southeast Asian traditions of epic narrative singing, for example; these typically feature a single singer-storyteller who takes an entire night to spin an episode from a well-known tale through narration and song. In the Kelantan province of Malaysia, a storyteller sings and narrates epic *tarikh selampit* tales, which recount the adventures of a folk hero named Selampit; the bard accompanies himself on a *rebab* (in Malaysia, a three-string fiddle) (Sweeney 1974; Matusky and Chopyak 1998:420). In *pantun Sunda* from West Java, Indonesia, a storyteller weaves tales from Sundanese mythology, and accompanies himself on a *kacapi* (boat-shaped zither) (Weintraub 1990:9). Among ethnic Lao in Thailand and Laos, the term *lam* is a generic designator for vocal music with flexible melodies; in *lam*

*nithan*, a solo singer presents epic stories drawn from stories about the Buddha (Miller 1998:325, 342) to the accompaniment of a *khaen* (Lao mouth organ). Most language groups in the Philippines maintain epic narrative forms that document local histories and local heroes, as well as ancestors and genealogies (Santos 1998:907). In the lowland, Christianized parts of the Philippines, groups of singers perform the *pasyon* (passion—a poetic rendition of Jesus Christ’s crucifixion) during the season of Lent (Canave-Dioquino 1998:844–845). The content of the stories might change with different layers of cultural influence, but the means of performance—epic singing—remains constant.

Dialogue songs, in which participants exchange clever, sometimes sexually suggestive, verses which they might improvise on the spot or have memorized previously, are another widespread genre throughout Southeast Asia. In past times in Central Thailand, men and women in isolated villages sang various kinds of *phleng pūn ban* (“songs of the village”) to the accompaniment of hand-clapping or percussion instruments (Miller 1998:298–301). Northern Thai *saw* repartee songs, on the other hand, are accompanied by a small ensemble of instruments (Miller 1998:313), while each of the singers in Lao *lam klawn* dialogue songs has his or her own *khaen*-playing accompanist (Miller 1998:325). For *balitaw* songs from the Visayan islands in the Philippines, a woman and a man compete with one another to see who is cleverer at coming up with witty and romantic verses to the accompaniment of a guitar (Pfeiffer 1976:127; Canave-Dioquino 1998:851). Cloaking the often intimate sentiments of courtship in song helps to take the edge of embarrassment off meeting and wooing potential mates.

### *Ostinato and Simultaneous Variation*

Examining the instrumental accompaniment for these vocal forms provides some insight into basic Southeast Asian musical processes. There are two fundamental approaches to Southeast Asian vocal music accompaniment: (1) *ostinato* and (2) *simultaneous variation*. *Ostinato* is a musical term that refers to a short rhythmic and/or melodic pattern or phrase that is repeated over and over (*ostinato* is the Italian word for “persistent” or “obstinate”). *Simultaneous variation* suggests performing concurrently two or more melodic lines, each of which is somehow recognizable as a variant of the same basic tune (some musicologists describe simultaneous variation with the term *heterophony*).

Listeners cannot help but become familiar with an ostinato quickly because it is short and persistently repeated; they soon come to rely on the ostinato's predictability. In this way, ostinato accompaniments provide a solid foundation upon which to build a cohesive vocal performance; no matter what the singer does next, his or her new material remains related to that which came before because it refers to the same ostinato. Using ostinatos as a principle for musical organization is not unique to Southeast Asia; musical traditions all over the world employ ostinatos at times, including Western popular music. For example, the hit song "Gloria," as sung by Van Morrison when he was a member of the group Them, features a four-beat chordal ostinato; the theme from the television series *The X Files* is based on an eight-beat ostinato pattern.

Ostinatos are ubiquitous in Southeast Asian musical traditions. In West Javanese *pantun Sunda*, for example, short ostinatos consisting of a few alternated pitches played with a regular pulse provide the sonic backdrop for various kinds of singing and narration (Weintraub 1990:61–63). In Visayan balitaw, the guitar provides a simple chordal ostinato to give shape to the verses (Pfeiffer 1976:127). In both cases, the ostinato accompaniment sets out a clear rhythmic pulse to give some temporal shape to the singers' melodic phrases. The ostinatos also emphasize a particular pitch or set of pitches, which provides tonal support for the melodies as well. By emphasizing a particular pitch, the ostinato creates the sense that a particular pitch is a tonal center or "home" pitch; by singing phrases that move away from and then return to the "home" pitch, a singer can create a sense of melodic direction and purpose.

In *tarikh selampit* accompaniment, on the other hand, the rebab part does not provide an ostinato; rather, it doubles or imitates the vocal part (Matusky and Chopyak 1998:420). It is a practical form of accompaniment in that it provides the singer a chance to collect his thoughts and take a breath, while filling in with the rebab. Simultaneous variation also capitalizes on the inherent differences in technique, and thus melodic idioms, that various musical instruments require.

These two styles of musical accompaniment—ostinato and simultaneous variation—are not absolutely mutually exclusive. In the various *lam* genres from Thailand and Laos, the khaen accompanist provides a steady rhythmic pulse and reiterates a drone pitch—creating a sort of ostinato—while improvising his own versions of the appropriate song melodies (Miller 1998:324). Thus, the khaen accompaniment lies



somewhere between ostinato and simultaneous variation. And, of course, the two accompaniment styles can be combined; in Northern Thai saw repartee songs, some of the instruments in the ensemble are percussion instruments and provide a rhythmic ostinato, while other instruments are melodic and provide simultaneous variations of the melody (Miller 1998:313).

Ostinato accompaniments tend to have a clear, regular rhythmic pulse. They are typically performed on struck percussion instruments or plucked string instruments, which can produce only musical tones that are not continuous—once a tone starts (as a consequence of striking a key or plucking a string), it immediately begins to fade away. For similar reasons, the musical pitches and timbres (tone colors) of ostinato instruments are fixed: unlike a voice, which can produce infinite gradations of pitch and timbre, struck or plucked ostinato instruments produce one single, discrete pitch at a time, and are uniform in timbre. There is, therefore, a marked contrast between ostinatos, with their regular pulse and discrete pitches and timbres, and vocal melodies (and any simultaneous variations), with their variable pitch and timbre and often flexible approach to rhythm. Fixed, regular ostinatos and free, variable melodies represent two layers of musical entities; like oil and water, the two layers do not blend together, and the result is a stratified, layered musical texture. Southeast Asian listeners typically find this dramatic contrast between “fixed” and “free” layers aesthetically pleasing.

The ostinato accompaniments for epic and courtship songs are typically played by a single performer (often the singer himself). Southeast Asian ensemble music often features several ostinato parts played by different performers on a variety of instruments. The way in which the ostinato parts are divided up among the players represents another widespread Southeast Asian musical process: interlocking parts. In addition, it models an important general aspect of Southeast Asian cultures: reciprocity.

### *Reciprocity and Interlocking Parts*

Anthony Reid includes “the importance of debt as a determinant of social obligation” among the common social patterns he identifies in Southeast Asia (Reid 1988:6). By debt, he refers to the social bond that



*Figure 1.5. Terraced rice fields in Bali (Henry Spiller)*

grows between partners when they trade goods, services, or favors. Under ideal circumstances, the bond becomes permanent when neither side is entirely certain exactly how much is owed to the other party; the relationship is sustained by an interlocking pattern of giving and receiving. Both parties are “rich” because they share each other’s wealth. The social benefits of these mutual reciprocal relationships seem to be greater than the sum of their parts.

Reciprocity also takes the form of mutual cooperation between individuals when it comes to agricultural concerns. The staple crop in most parts of Southeast Asia is rice; rice is a marsh plant that acquires nutrients not from the soil but rather from standing water. As a result, if rice is cultivated in a wet, marshy environment, it can be grown in the same plot year after year without exhausting the soil (Higham 1996: 322–323). The key to increasing rice yields in ancient Southeast Asia was to create irrigation systems that not only simulated marshy conditions, but provided control over the movement of water through the fields to create marshes only when they were needed. Intricate systems of hillside rice terraces, along with the canals and weirs that provide and control their water supply, are a hallmark of intensive agriculture throughout Southeast Asia (see Figure 1.5).

Individual farmers control the flow of water in and out of their fields; those working within these elaborate systems, however, must pay close attention to what goes on upstream (whence their water comes) as well as downstream (where their water drains). Not only must they make sure there is water available (and somewhere to send it), but they must also make sure that large areas of fields go dry for sustained periods of time to keep pests from getting out of hand (Lansing 1995: 99–101). The key to success is cooperation; the irrigation system is a complex network of individual fields, managed by equal and interdependent family groups (O'Connor 1995:997). When each family farm times its own needs to interlock with the needs of its neighbors, everybody profits; the yield is, once again, greater than the sum of its parts.

Given the great cultural rewards of reciprocity and cooperation in Southeast Asia, it is little wonder that Southeast Asian musicians, too, use interlocking parts to create a musical effect that is greater than the sum of its parts. A simple rhythmic ostinato consists of moments where the musician makes a sound separated by moments of silence. If each of several musicians plays a simple ostinato, but each times his or her part in such a way that its sounds occur when the other ostinatos are silent, the result is a stream of interlocking sounds that join together in the listener's ear to create one single, complex musical result. For audiences accustomed to the idea that intense cooperation is "natural," the results of interlocking musical processes cannot help but seem "beautiful."

### *Southeast Asian Musical Processes in Toba Batak Gondang Music*

A living music tradition practiced in North Sumatra provides specific illustrations of the Southeast Asian musical processes described above. The Toba Batak are one of several ethnic groups living in North Sumatra, sometimes collectively called Batak, who speak related languages and have comparable customs. Toba Batak occupy the area around an enormous lake called Lake Toba, where they subsist mainly through fishing and rice cultivation. Toba Batak reckon family relationships through the male lines, and keep close track of rather distant patrilineal relatives. Several families belonging to an extended lineage might live together in a large multi-family house.

The Toba Batak refer to the traditional system of social, legal, and religious principles that guide the lives of their communities as *adat*;

many other cultures in the area use the same term to describe their systems, although the systems themselves might differ. Adat is not cast in stone; it changes over time to respond to different circumstances and needs. At any given time, however, it provides a secure set of guidelines for governing relationships between individuals and families, as well as between ordinary humans and the supernatural world. Music and dance are among the features of community life governed by adat.

The characteristic musical ensemble of the Toba Batak, called *gondang sabangunan*, is a symbol of Toba Batak adat. The ensemble includes a set of five tuned drums called *taganing*; two larger drums called *gordang* and *odap*; a gong chime with four suspended gongs called *ogung*; a percussion instrument called *hesek*; and a double-reed wind instrument called *sarune*. According to adat, a performance of *gondang sabangunan* without its accompanying dancing, called *tortor*, is incomplete.

One customary context for musical activities is a feast, called a *horja*, which strengthens the social relationships between members of a patrilineage, the lineages from which their wives come, and the lineages into which their daughters marry. Other contexts for ritual music-making include pre-funeral ceremonies for deceased family members and sacrificial ceremonies to mark the rice-growing season.

Until the mid-nineteenth century, most Toba Batak practiced a kind of religion which paid homage to a variety of deities and ancestor spirits; ceremonial activities involving *gondang sabangunan* provided a means to communicate with these supernatural beings. Musicians were considered to be experts who could communicate with spirit forces; they were addressed by special titles when performing that showed respect for their important religious function (one such title was *batara guru*, the name of a Hindu deity). The musicians set up to perform on the Batak house's balcony, called *bonggar-bonggar*, which was up above the guests and dancers. This position symbolically aligned the musicians and the *gondang sabangunan* ensemble with the unseen spirit world.

Unlike many of their neighbors in Sumatra, Toba Batak resisted conversion to Islam. In the 1860s, however, German missionaries made considerable headway toward converting many Toba Batak to Protestant Christianity. Christian missionaries initially tried to eradicate traditional music because of its links to spirit worship; its links to adat, however, made its complete eradication impossible. As a compromise of sorts, Protestant Toba Batak avoid those ceremonies which are specifi-

cally associated with spirit worship, and do not participate in adat practices which involve honoring the musicians as mediators with the spirit world (Koentjaraningrat 1975:62–76; Yampolsky 1997; Purba 2002; Purba 2003).

The social context of *gondang sabangunan* reveals this Southeast Asian community's own individualized "layers" of cultural influences. Current Toba Batak adat reflects a syncretic blend of animism (a belief system in which many natural objects are thought to have spirits or souls of some kind), ancestor worship, Hinduism, and (most recently) Christianity. Adat has bent with each succeeding wave of influence without completely breaking.

The ensemble makeup of the *gondang sabangunan* ensemble, too, exemplifies these cultural layers. The original gongs that make up the *ogung* were probably imported from Java, and might thus be considered to represent the influence of outside powers; current *ogung* are typically made in Sumatra from iron. The double reed wind instrument's name *sarune*, and probably the instrument itself, is modelled after a Middle Eastern prototype and is an artifact of the Islamic presence in Sumatra. *Hesek* can be made from just about anything that makes the clinking sound its name imitates—such as an iron or glass plate hit with a stick, an empty beer bottle struck with a nail, or two axe heads struck together.

The parts that musicians play on these *gondang sabangunan* instruments exhibit the stratified musical layers that characterize much Southeast Asian ensemble music. They also exemplify the musical processes of ostinato, simultaneous variation, and interlocking parts. The following paragraphs outline how Toba Batak *gondang sabangunan* music layers these processes.

### *Gong Cycles*

Five musicians provide the basic ostinato for a *gondang sabangunan* piece. The *hesek* player sets a constant pulse by hitting the instrument in a regular rhythm. The other musicians play the four hanging *ogung* gongs; each plays a different repeating pattern on his gong, which differs in pitch and timbres from the others, as illustrated in Figure 1.6. In the figure, each horizontal column represents a "time slice" (the moment of a pulse or a subdivision of a pulse) and each row represents one of the instruments. If the box formed at the intersection of a row and a column is filled in, it means that the instrument corresponding

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<i>Hesek</i>	x		x		x		x	
<i>Panggora (muted)</i>	x			x				
<i>Doal (muted)</i>		x		x		x		x
<i>Ihutan (rings)</i>					x			
<i>Oloan (rings)</i>	x							

*hesek*: clinking rattle

*panggora*: muted gong sound (player holds the gong's rim to mute its sound)

*doal*: muted gong sound (player leans an arm against the gong to mute the sound)

*ihutan*: ringing gong sound, higher in pitch than oloan

*oloan*: ringing gong sound, lower in pitch than ihutan

Figure 1.6. Gong parts in *gondang sabangunan* (after Yampolsky 1996)

to the row is hit during the column's time slice. In performance, the musicians would repeat the parts notated in the figure throughout the piece. Looking at a single row provides a map of a single instrument's part. Looking at a column provides an idea of what instruments are being struck for any given time slice. Looking at the whole diagram imparts a sense of how the different parts interlock to create an eight-beat cycle, each beat of which is characterized by a unique combination of pitches and timbres (this ostinato pattern can be heard on Track 1 on the CD that accompanies this book).

#### *Melody and Simultaneous Variation*

Using this ostinato as a backdrop, the *taganing* (set of five tuned drums) and *sarune* (double-reed wind instrument) each performs an idiosyncratic version of a piece's melody. Several instruments simultaneously playing idiosyncratic variations of a common abstract melody at different pitch levels and densities results in a complex musical texture which may be called simultaneous variation. Each part remains individually audible because it occupies its own sonic "niche," isolated from the other parts by its pitch level, rhythmic density, and idiom. Yet the overall effect is that of an ensemble playing as a whole. A group of men, women, and children reciting the "Pledge of Allegiance" together provides an apt analogy. They are all saying the same words at approximately the same time, but listeners can distinguish each indi-

vidual's voice as it emerges from the chorus for several reasons. For one thing, men tend to have lower-pitched voices than women and children, and each individual's voice has its own individual tone color. Furthermore, if the reciters come from different parts of the country, each might have a unique regional accent; neither the Bostonian's nasal "fleg" nor the Texan's drawling "flayag" exactly corresponds to the abstract written word "flag." Some of the children may not have figured out all the words quite yet, juxtaposing, for example "liberty and just us all" with the adults' "liberty and justice for all." As each person intones the well-known words, he or she is likely to inflect them differently by applying idiosyncratic accents and intonations. Some individuals may get through the words faster than others, and wait at the ends of phrases for the others to catch up. While listeners hear a unified "Pledge of Allegiance," they also hear the many individual voices that make up the group—many simultaneous variations.

Although it is usually clear whether a given taganing drum has a higher pitch or lower pitch than the others, the taganing's five pitches are relatively indistinct, because it is often difficult to tune drums to have a clear, precise pitch. Once a drum is struck, there is nothing the musician can do to sustain the note; it dies away very quickly. The sarune, on the other hand, provides its player the capability to play clear pitches, to hold notes for a very long time, and to vary pitches either subtly or greatly by varying breath pressure and covering some or all of the instrument's six finger holes. The sarune player finds it comfortable to produce a continuous sound and frequent slides, trills, and other ornaments. The musical style that results from the peculiarities of an instrument's construction is that instrument's *idiom*; an instrument's idiom is determined in part by what is technically feasible and comfortable to play on the instrument.

It is difficult to imagine two instruments with idioms more different than the taganing and the sarune. Despite the differences in their instrumental idioms, however, the sarune and taganing players perform the "same" melody. It is, perhaps, more precise to say that the sarune and taganing players base their parts on a single melody and play simultaneous variations of it. It is difficult to say with any certainty exactly what sort of melody the musicians have in their heads because this "conceptual" melody is abstract—it cannot be heard in its mental form because it becomes audible only through the medium of an instrumental or vocal idiom, and the precise details of the melody are determined by the idiom.

For example, the abstract melody might involve the vague idea that a particular note should be sustained for a long time. A taganing player can only imitate the effect of a long note by repeatedly and rapidly striking a single drum; the taganing idiom is not conducive to playing sustained notes because the sound of a drum cannot be sustained—it immediately dies away once the drum is hit. In contrast, a sarune player not only can sustain a single note for a long time by continuing to push air through the reed, he can vary the note's timbre by changing the force of the air, or decorate the note with idiomatic ornaments such as trills, *tremolo* (minute variations in volume), or *vibrato* (minute variations in pitch). When ethnomusicologist Mauly Purba asked musicians who can play both taganing and sarune to sing the melody, each musician came up with a slightly different, but recognizably similar, version. Of course, the melodies they sang were different from both the taganing and sarune versions because the vocal idiom is different from either instrument's idiom. As Purba summarizes the results of his investigation, "it is only in the imagination of musicians that the two instruments play the same melody . . . two versions of the same basic melody are actually never the same" (Purba 2002:64). The nature of the simultaneous variations played on sarune and taganing is clearly audible on Track 1 of the CD that accompanies this book.

### *Drumming*

The final musician in a gondang sabangunan ensemble plays a large drum called *gordang*. The *gordang* part is neither melody nor ostinato; the player performs rhythmic patterns that can vary from one repetition to the next. An additional instrument, the *odap*, is an extra drum played by the taganing player, but which rarely is played or included in modern ensembles; its part, like that of the *gordang*, consists of variable rhythmic patterns.

The gondang sabangunan ensemble encapsulates many of the Southeast Asian musical processes, contexts, and influences described above. Gondang pieces are based on an ostinato part that comprises five simple ostinatos (played on *hesek* and the various gongs that make up the *ogung*) which interlock to create a cyclic accompaniment. Layered on top of this even-pulsed ostinato is a melody presented in the form of simultaneous variations (taganing and sarune). These various musical layers do not blend—the particular qualities of each remains clear and distinct—yet the combination of the layers is regarded as pleasing. Another level of layers—namely layers of cultural influences



on the region—is evident in the names of the instruments, the makeup of the ensemble, and the uses to which the music is put.

### *Other Sumatran Gong Ensemble Music*

Other so-called Batak groups living around Lake Toba, such as the Karo, have similar ensembles with drums, gong chimes, a double-reed wind instrument, and cymbals (Kartomi 1998). The Minangkabau of West Sumatra, too, have comparable gong chime ensembles, called *talempong*, which are associated with rice ceremonies and life-cycle celebrations (Kartomi 1998:609). In these ensembles, the main instruments are three or four pairs of small gongs. For marching, there is a single musician for each pair of gongs; in a stationary situation, all the small gongs are laid on a frame (Kartomi 1998:609–610). The ensemble might be rounded out with two-headed drums called *gandang*, a frame drum, a suspended gong or gongs, and a double-reed wind instrument (Kartomi 1998:609).

While there are clearly musical similarities between the Minangkabau and the Toba Batak, their very different social and cultural histories contribute to significant differences as well. The Minangkabau are well-known in anthropological circles because they are one of the world's rare matrilineal societies—rather than reckoning kinship and descent through male lines, they consider only those people connected through female ancestors (mother, grandmother, etc.) to be kin. Minangkabau gong music often is played by women—quite unconventional in Indonesia, but consistent with the Minangkabau's kinship system (Kartomi 1998:609).

In relatively egalitarian societies such as the Toba Batak, gongs may be valuable items, but the music played on bronze and non-bronze instruments is often interchangeable. In other words, musicians use the same musical processes for gong and non-gong music; the processes are independent of what kind of musical instruments upon which they are played. The choice of whether to use bronze or not depends not so much on the wealth or status of the music's sponsors, but rather the context of the event. Gong music is more appropriate for outdoor events or large gatherings, while non-bronze music is better suited for intimate, indoor gatherings. The Toba Batak *gondang hasapi* ensemble, for example, imitates the musical structure of the *gondang sabangu-*

nan ensemble using stringed instruments instead of gongs. A plucked instrument with two strings, called *hasapi ende*, plays the melody in simultaneous variation with a smaller version of the sarune, or, more recently, a bamboo flute. The part played on a second plucked string instrument, called *hasapi doal*, resembles the ogung's interlocking gong ostinato. Like the gondang sabangunan gong ensemble, the *gondang hasapi* ensemble is rounded out with a hesek (rattle), and often other instruments as well (Yampolsky 1997).

The fact that gong ensembles (such as gondang sabangunan) and non-gong ensembles (such as gondang hasapi) play the same repertory begs the question of which came first—it is not clear whether gong ensembles are imitating earlier musical processes, or vice versa. On the eastern Indonesian island of Roti, some musicians claim that the *sasandu* tube zither was invented to imitate their *meko* gong ensemble. Indeed, the *sasandu*'s nine lowest strings correspond to the *meko* ensemble's nine gongs, although only a single musician is required to play the *sasandu* (as opposed to six or more for a *meko* group). A *sasandu* player always is accompanied by another musician who taps out rhythms on a small drum (or even on the *sasandu* itself) that correspond to the *meko* ensemble's drum part. Others argue the exact opposite—that the gong ensemble was invented to imitate the *sasandu*. The Rotinese regard the *sasandu* as a symbol of their culture and ascribe great age to it (Basile 1998:4). Historically, the *meko* ensemble with gongs is a relatively recent innovation; it is thought that gongs arrived in Roti from Java only in the early nineteenth century. The term *meko*, however, formerly was associated with a percussion ensemble made of stone and wooden percussion instruments; its music bears many resemblances to *sasandu* music (Basile and Hoskins 1998). Perhaps more significant than which came first is that both the modern *meko* ensemble and the *sasandu* tube zither share repertory and aspects of style, and both clearly exhibit the Southeast Asian musical processes of ostinato, simultaneous variation, and interlocking parts.

### Expanded Musical Processes

Layers—layers of cultural influences, layers of musical processes—seem to pervade Southeast Asia. Still another kind of layering characterizes some of the more highly organized, state- and kingdom-

oriented Southeast Asian civilizations: layers of social classes. Although irrigated rice cultivation at first promotes egalitarian societies, as irrigation systems become larger and more complex, they require more centralized authority to run and maintain them. Stratification of societies begins to develop when some individuals acquire permanent “rights” (such as individual land ownership, for example) to control and authority, as well as the increased wealth and status that go along with such rights.

There is, of course, tension between the egalitarian, consensus-based localized control of irrigation and notions of class-differentiated societies. The emerging elite classes in early Southeast Asian political units generally found ways to justify and exercise their “right” to authority and control that did not directly contradict the egalitarian, cooperation-based economies. Rights to land use were passed from one generation to the next; individuals who could demonstrate a relationship with generations and generations of ancestors, then, could lay claim to authority. Establishing a connection to the unseen and non-human spirits who had great influence over the environmental variables that create agricultural success or spell crop failure was another way to accrue status.

As early as the first century AD, traders and missionaries from India travelled to Southeast Asian communities and Southeast Asian sailors visited India (Lockard 1995:17). The Indian/Hindu notion of “god-king”—which holds that a ruler is in fact an incarnation of a deity—found fertile ground among emerging Southeast Asian elite classes. Establishing one’s self as a god-king (or even as a relative of a god-king) consolidates in one fell swoop significant ancestral rights as well as control over the spirit world (Day 1996:388), imposing a new social paradigm without interrupting the already smoothly-running day-to-day practice of agriculture.

These kings exercised their power by acquiring wealth and status from those around them in return for their divine intervention. However, these divine kings were not as politically powerful as one might expect; because prestige was the basis for their rule, their authority extended only as far as their repute. Furthermore, their claim to authority was greatly weakened if their divine interventions failed.

Historian Oliver Wolters has compared the way the political units under these god-kings operate to a *mandala*. To Hindus and Buddhists, a mandala is a sacred representation of the universe, often in the form

of a diagram consisting of concentric circles. Sacred power and knowledge are at the center of the diagram; through ritual or meditation, one enters at the edge of the mandala and proceeds through the various surrounding layers of circles to the center and the insights that reside there. The king and his spiritual power form the center of a political mandala; his influence emanates in all directions in weakening concentric circles. The center's power depends on its continued ability to affect the circumstances of those under its influence (Britannica 2003). Any small community could be under the influence of several such mandalas; although a king's spiritual prestige and influence might have a long reach, in many ways the people who lived within a mandala led relatively autonomous existences (Reid 1999:54) as they maintained and regulated their own irrigation systems and community lives.

Acquiring and maintaining prestige, then, became one of the main occupations of god-kings and their courts in mandala polities. Anthropologist Clifford Geertz came up with the concept of a "theater-state" to describe how royal persons (and would-be royalty) sponsored elaborate rituals not only to demonstrate, but to legitimate as well, their divine rights and authority—to the point where the rituals themselves virtually became the source of power (Geertz 1973:335). God-kings spent their wealth on elaborate rituals to maintain their prestige—the prestige that brought them the wealth they required to sponsor elaborate rituals to maintain their prestige, and so on. In a way, the whole Southeast Asian system of kingship was a cycle of wealth acquisition and outlay that was simply layered on top of the day-to-day economies of the majority.

One of the basic ideas that drives divine kingship is a belief in "parallelism between Macrocosmos and Microcosmos, between the universe and the world of men" (Heine-Geldern 1942:15). The court cultures that coalesced around Southeast Asia's divine kings sought to make manifest the parallels between the spiritual and real worlds by mimicking the order of the cosmos in the trappings of the court. Maintaining order and symmetry in the real world meant assuring the stability of cosmic order as well. Buildings and temples in the form of mandalas expressed this order and were one expression of the king's pivotal position between heaven and earth.

Musical forms provided another medium for such expressions. In Bali, for example, gamelan music is sometimes interpreted explicitly as

an “aural mandala.” Balinese treatises associate musical tones with gods, colors, directions, and the like to create mandala structures. The music’s rhythmic cycles represent the mandala’s outlines; the music’s three-section forms map to tripartite structures of head-body-foot and mountain-midworld-sea (Harnish 1998:740).

The god-kings’ musicians took the musical principles that express these ideas of cosmic order and divine authority and layered them over the musical principles that grow out of fundamental Southeast Asian ecological and social principles. The result was an audible metaphor of their divinity and authority; it was music that operated according to the musical processes of their subjects but was governed by the cosmic principles that legitimated the god-kings.

### *Khmer Court Music*

Some of the earliest mandala polities were organized by the ancestors of the Khmer people who live in present-day Cambodia and southern Vietnam. One of the first organized governments in the area was Funan, which lasted from the third through sixth centuries and boasted elaborate irrigation systems, Indianized ideas of government and the cosmos, and extensive trading networks reaching to Rome and Central Asia (Lockard 1995:18). A later Khmer kingdom, called Angkor, flourished between the ninth and fifteenth centuries in the area now known as Cambodia. Angkor society was greatly stratified, with a powerful god-king who maintained an extensive network of ritual specialists who maintained his cult. The famous temple complex called Angkor Wat, which the Khmer built in the twelfth century, is an expression of the worldly and heavenly powers of the Angkor monarchs. Angkor’s irrigation systems were very efficient, and farmers produced great quantities of rice; this productivity helped finance the prestige-building activities of the royal court.

Rival kingdoms of people living in what is now Thailand eventually led to the downfall of Angkor in the fifteenth century. Among the spoils of their victory over Angkor were musicians and dancers. A Cambodian mandala polity continued on, but with a greatly reduced radius of influence; eventually the kingdom looked to France for protection from its aggressive neighbors. The rival kingdoms, which eventually came to be known in the West as Siam and then Thailand, adopted many of the trappings of the Khmer courts, including music and dance.

### *Cambodian Court Music*

It is extremely unlikely that Cambodian court music in the twenty-first century is very similar to the music of Angkor, but it does seem reasonable to believe that some of the musical principles underlying the court music of the present reflect the musical values that drove the god-kings' theater-state. Bas relief stone carvings on the walls of Angkor Wat depict musical instruments that resemble some of the instruments of the modern court musical ensemble, called *pinn peat* (Sam, Roongrüang et al. 1998:157). Modern *pinn peat* music certainly exhibits the Southeast Asian musical processes discussed so far, inflected to express ideas of cosmic order in musical form.

A full modern *pinn peat* ensemble includes two double-reed wind instruments (*sralai*) of different sizes and pitch levels, two xylophones of different sizes (*roneat ek* and *roneat thung*), a metallophone (*roneat dek*), two circular gong chimes of different sizes (*korng tauch* and *korng thomm*), two drums (*skor thomm* and *sampho*), a pair of small cymbals called *chhing*, and vocalists (Sam, Roongrüang et al. 1998:183). The Khmer term *roneat* comes from a word for bamboo strips, but includes any instrument with bars of wood or metal (Sam, Roongrüang et al. 1998:163). The word *korng* is the Khmer equivalent of gong; the Khmer gong chimes include a series of tuned gongs laid horizontally in a circular frame; the players can use soft or hard mallets to strike the gongs, depending on the desired volume. A smaller version of the *pinn peat* ensemble includes only one of each instrument type.

The performers on the *pinn peat* ensemble's melodic instruments play simultaneous variations of a piece's fixed tune. Like the *sarune* and *taganing* players in Toba Batak *gondang sabangunan* ensemble, none of the *pinn peat* instrumentalists plays a literal rendition of the composition's tune; each plays instead a version governed by the instrument's particular idiom. In the music of Indianized Southeast Asian courts, such as the *pinn peat* ensemble, however, each instrument's idiom is restricted not only by the particular instrument's physical idiosyncrasies and limitations, but by convention as well. Some parts are thought to lead while other parts follow. Some parts are constrained to move in rhythmically regular, melodically smooth versions of the melody, while others are empowered to indulge in more varied rhythmic motives and more dramatic melodic contours. Some instrument parts are supposed to be more "dense" than others (in this context, calling a part more "dense" than another suggests that an instru-

mentalist fits more notes—more strokes on the xylophone or gong chime, for example—within the same period of time).

The layers of Khmer simultaneous variations are much more distinct from one another than the simultaneous variations we've encountered before, however. Each variation has its own approach to rhythm and density. Figure 1.7 provides an approximate idea of this approach to simultaneous variations by lining up some playful variations on the basic phrase "I like iced tea." If one person recited the basic phrase slowly with a distinct pulse, others could fill in different variants of the phrase while remaining in sync with the basic phrase. The next variation, too, has a regular pulse, but it proceeds twice as fast as the basic phrase, repeats the basic phrase twice but slightly changes its meaning by introducing a new adjective. The following variation, "I really like drinking iced Angkor tea," features both long and short syllables (in the pattern long-short-short) that provide a rhythmic contrast to the regular pulse of the basic phrase. The final variation stutters the basic phrase; it moves more quickly than all the others, but adds no new semantic material. At any given moment, all four voices might be saying completely different words, so they do not blend together very well at all; at the end of the phrase, however, they all arrive together in unison on the word "tea."

Some musicologists call this particular approach to simultaneous variation *polyphonic stratification*; the term evokes a musical texture with "many voices" (which is the literal meaning of the Greek-derived term *polyphonic*) which are layered on top of each other like strata of sedimentary rock. In such rock formations, clearly delineated sheets of different kinds of rock are layered on top of one another. Although they form a single mass of rock, each layer (or stratum) is clearly defined. When different voices or instruments perform essentially the same melody, but with different idioms, pitch levels, timbres, and densities, each part (or stratum) clearly stands out from the others, even as they all combine into a single "stratified" musical texture.

This stratification is an echo of the social stratification of the mandala kingdoms. The different social classes have different duties, functions, and privileges, and must endeavor to remain stratified even as they act together toward common goals. Individuals are constantly reminded of the reality of social strata, and even the language reinforces class distinctions. Like many Southeast Asian languages, the Khmer language forces individuals to "rank" themselves in relation to the peo-

			I				like				iced				tea
	I		like		Khmer		tea		I		like		iced		tea
			I		real-	ly	like		drink-	ing	iced		Ang-	kor	tea
I	I	I	I	like	like	like	like	iced	iced	iced	iced	tea	tea	tea	tea

Figure 1.7. Stratified variations on “I like iced tea”



ple they talk to by selecting the appropriate forms of address (Sam and Campbell 1991:30). There is no simple, all-purpose, neutral pronoun equivalent to the English “you” in Khmer; any form of direct address involves an acknowledgment of age, status, and class differences. In languages such as Khmer and Javanese, there are even entirely separate vocabularies to use when addressing royalty; in effect, communication between different social classes requires the use of substantially different languages.

It requires only a few slight inflections to the musical process of simultaneous variation to arrive at polyphonic stratification; those adjustments, however, provide a potent aesthetic analogy for a stratified society and further reinforce the stratification of social classes. The ostinato musical process is likewise modified slightly in Khmer court music to conform better to a mandala concept.

A key instrument in the pinn peat ensemble is also the smallest: the pair of two-inch-diameter cymbals called *chhing*. A *chhing* player holds one cymbal in each hand and strikes them together. There are two sounds, each with an onomatopoeic name: *chhing* is an open, ringing sound, while *chhepp* is a damped, choked sound produced by holding the cymbals together after striking them. In most pinn peat pieces, the *chhing* player sets up an ostinato, constructed of alternating *chhing* and *chhepp* sounds, to keep time. Even though there is no appreciable difference in volume between the two strokes, Khmer listeners hear the *chhepp* (damped) sounds as accented, and the *chhing* sounds as unaccented. Furthermore, they consider a full rendition of an ostinato to include two iterations of “*chhing chhepp*”; the first *chhepp* is heard as having a lesser accent than the second *chhepp*.

Khmer musicians therefore think of the *chhing/chhepp* ostinato as a *cycle*—a pattern of hierarchical accents, marked by *chhing* and *chhepp* sounds, that repeats. The geometric figure of a circle provides a convenient metaphor for representing a musical cycle; circles are the stuff of which mandalas are made as well. Correlating a cyclical concept with the organizing principle of musical ostinato once again redirects and recontextualizes a Southeast Asian musical process to legitimize a new, Indic approach to cosmic order.

A mandala involves a series of concentric circles; the *chhing* cycles of Khmer court music, too, exhibit a kind of concentricity. Khmer pieces use one of three different levels of *chhing* cycles; each level has a cycle with four *chhing* and *chhepp* strokes, but the four strokes come

faster or slower in the various levels. The first level fits a full cycle—four strokes—into the same amount of time that two strokes occupy in the second level, and that one stroke occupies in the third level. Taken as a whole, then, the musical repertory that encompasses these three levels of chhing cycles represent a sort of time mandala; by working through these varied representations of time, performers and listeners experience the cosmos in an earthly form.

Human perception of time does not truly run in a circle, of course, but humans recognize that certain kinds of events do happen over and over again. Day alternates with night in a predictable fashion. The procession of seasons repeats over and over again. And even though individual plants, animals, and people are born and die, the progress of each individual life-form's existence follows the same general cycle as all the others. Musical ostinatos occur in time; extending the circle metaphor just a bit further maps notions of cyclic time onto a cyclic ostinato, and potentially unites the order of the cosmos with music. Music at the court of the god-king, like the god-king himself, is an interface between the spiritual and real worlds.

The player of the drum called *sampho* leads the pinn peat ensemble; he plays an 8- or 16-beat cycle that corresponds to the chhing cycle. This drum is unusual among Cambodian drums in that musicians consider it to be a sacred instrument, and its construction involves special ceremonies (Sam, Roongrüang et al. 1998:168). The basic parts played on the *sampho* are, like the chhing parts, cyclic patterns that help regulate the ensemble's rhythm; the *sampho* player controls the ensemble's tempo as well.

Drumming that regulates the ensemble plays an important role in many Southeast Asian ensembles. Typically, drummers coordinate the rhythmic activities of their fellow musicians by subtly inserting cues and signals into the regular cycles of strokes that make up their parts. In this way, drumming models the role of the king—to mediate between the cosmic and the ordinary, to keep worldly matters in sync with the cosmic order. Drumming that regulates the temporal aspects of ensemble music is yet another layer of musical function in Southeast Asian music and represents yet another important musical process.

Although it is unlikely that they did so deliberately, musicians modified fundamental Southeast Asian musical processes to reflect social values. The result was appropriate music for the courts of medieval Southeast Asian god-kings. Ostinatos made up of interlocking parts

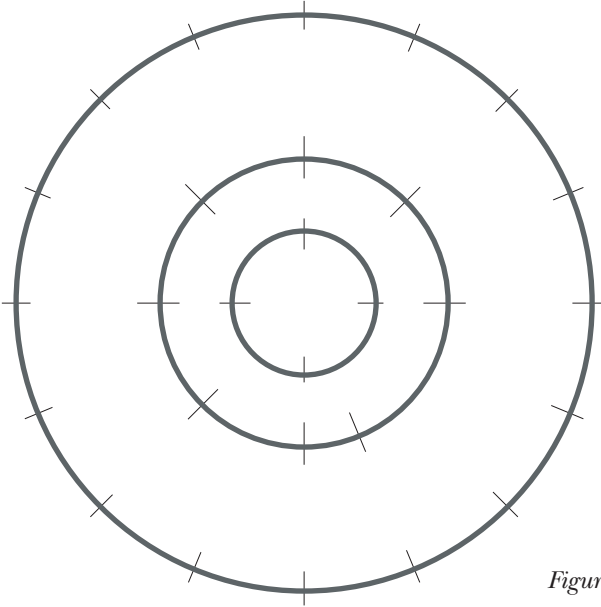
were reconceptualized as an underlying cycle that could be expanded and contracted like the circles of a mandala. The increasingly specialized parts played on various melodic instruments subtly transformed the principle of simultaneous variation into polyphonic stratification. The addition of a new part, played on Indian-derived drums, served to control the tempo and regulate the cycles and keep them in sync with the cosmos.

Moving from ostinato to cycle, moving from simultaneous variation to stratified polyphony, and providing a single mediating force in an otherwise egalitarian structure—these changes are in some ways only minor inflections of Southeast Asia's persistent musical processes. On the other hand, they express profound cultural changes—social classes, divine kingship, large political spheres of influence. The initial success of Southeast Asian gong-chime ensembles lay precisely in this seeming paradox; by maintaining continuity with older musical processes, the music demonstrated the compatibility of new social orders with time-honored principles. New musical concepts were layered on top of existing musical processes in much the same way that new social classes were layered on top of old ones; the kings merely overlaid the stamp of cosmic order upon existing ecological, agricultural, and economic processes, which continued much as if there had been no administrative change.

### *Thai Court Music*

The music of Thailand's royal courts owes much to Angkor musical traditions. The Thai ensemble called *pi phat* is clearly related to its Cambodian cousin; it includes a double-reed wind instrument (*pi*), xylophones (*ranat*), gong chimes (*khawng*), cymbals (*ching*), and drums (*taphon*). Like Cambodian pinn peat music, most Thai court music pieces are based on one of three basic rhythmic cycle levels.

The expandability and contractability of underlying musical cycles is a recurring theme in Southeast Asian musical traditions. An important musical genre in nineteenth and twentieth century Thai music called *phleng thao* specifically exploited the elasticity of underlying cycles. The term *thao* suggests a set of things in graduated sizes (such as a set of nesting bowls, each smaller than the previous one); a *phleng thao* composition presents the same basic melody in all three of the Thai cy-



*Figure 1.8. Concentric cycles*

cle levels. Performing a tune in a different level is not a matter of simply playing the melody twice as fast or twice as slowly, however. The melodic density of each musician's part (that is, how many strokes or notes are played per arbitrary unit of time) should stay about the same at each level; to spread the melody out into a longer rhythmic cycle, then, requires adding more notes, while contracting the melody into a shorter rhythmic cycle involves leaving notes out.

Figure 1.8 demonstrates this elasticity with a series of concentric circles. Each circle's circumference is twice that of the preceding one. The innermost circle has four equal arcs. The middle circle has eight arcs, each of which is the same size as an arc on the innermost circle; in other words, it requires eight marks to traverse the second circle at the same density of the first. The large outer circle requires sixteen arcs to mark off the entire circle at the same density.

For most western listeners, a melody with twice as many notes that takes twice as long to play as its "parent" is hardly the same melody at all. Thai listeners, however, pay special attention to the pitches that occur at important structural points, such as at the end of the cycle. When stretching a melody out for a *phleng thao* piece, Thai musicians take care to ensure that each phrase or the expanded version ends

with the corresponding structural pitch of the original at the end of the cycle; this keeps intact the identity of the piece, while allowing for different melodic twists and turns along the way.

A phleng thao piece leads the listeners through all three expansions, giving them the opportunity to marvel at the different qualities and characters each different version imparts to the “same” melodic material. With their metaphorically “concentric” cycles, such pieces seem to be aural mandalas that lead their listeners not only to some better understanding of the cosmic order, but to the secure feeling that the world is in sync with the cosmos. Phleng thao pieces were developed in Thailand in the late nineteenth century (although, as ethnomusicologist Judith Becker points out, the principles of expansion/contraction on which the genre is based are quite old [Becker 1980:454]). This was a time when the Thai social order faced significant upheaval. Unlike neighboring countries, Thailand successfully resisted overt colonization by European powers, although the Thai monarchs shored up their own independence in part by promoting “modernization” programs from within—learning Western ways and selectively absorbing them (the book and movie *Anna and the King of Siam*, as well as the Broadway musical version *The King and I*, present a romanticized version of this process). Perhaps the musical genre phleng thao was a reaction to these social changes; with its explicit references to the god-king as an interface between heaven and earth, it allowed its aristocratic audience to maintain some semblance of the old order.

### Contexts for Music-making

The previous sections have already mentioned several contexts for music-making, including storytelling, courtship songs, religious ceremonies, and ceremonies in support of the theater-state. In ritual contexts, music serves as a medium with which to communicate with the spirit world, whether that world be in the form of ancestors and place spirits (in the case of Toba Batak) or a Hindu-Buddhist cosmos (in the case of Khmer and Thai music). English speakers use the term “music” to refer to a circumscribed set of specific activities and contexts; very often, there is no exact translation of the term “music” in other languages. Often Southeast Asian performing arts which English-speakers

instinctively categorize as “music” inextricably involve activities that do not usually fall within the English-language category of “music”—activities English speakers would characterize as “dance” and “theater” for example. A clear line between ritual music and music for entertainment is similarly difficult to draw in Southeast Asia; very often the same qualities that make music ritually powerful also make them enjoyable as well. When new formal belief systems make ritual music obsolete, artistic activities are often stripped of overt ritual or religious significance and recast as pure entertainment. It is not always clear whether such recontextualizations represent genuine change in meaning, or merely submersion of ritual significance; as time goes on, musical pieces, styles, ensembles, and genres take on multiple meanings.

### *Ritual*

In Southeast Asia, shamanic healing rituals often involve a mystical journey into the spirit world. Musical accompaniment varies from place to place; rituals might involve bamboo instruments, drums, and/or gong ensembles. Specific pieces are generally associated with specific stages of the spiritual journey (Sadie 2001).

In Cambodian villages, for example, shamanic healers conduct ceremonies called *arakk* to enter a trance state in which the cause of illness is revealed. The ceremony begins with a song that invites a spirit-world teacher to enter the shaman and preside over the ceremony. Once the cause of the illness is understood, the musicians play a special ending piece to thank the spirits and end the ceremony (Sam, Roongrüang et al. 1998:193–195). The songs give shape and form to the ceremony.

It is quite common throughout Southeast Asia to associate specific pieces with particular functions in a multitude of contexts. In the Tuaran region of northern Borneo, for example, the sound of gong ensemble music creates a ritual space (Skog 1993:61) where there was no sacred space before. Specific pieces are reserved for particular stages of particular rituals; and so, by playing a particular piece, the musicians consecrate an otherwise ordinary place for the specific ritual purpose.

On the eastern Indonesian island of Sumba, descendents of a deceased patriarch expend enormous resources on cutting a huge stone gravemarker. Much of the expense comes from feeding and entertaining the hundreds of relatives and neighbors required to drag a five-ton

stone from the quarry to the grave. For these funeral and stone-dragging rituals, musicians perform gong and drum music which includes named gong patterns that can be played only for these occasions (Adams 1981:80).

### *Dance and Theater*

Just as particular pieces are associated with particular ritual purposes, certain musical pieces often have specific theatrical meanings. Dance and theater are integral parts of ritual activities involving music. Performances, like shamanic rituals, often are given form and coherence through the use of structural musical pieces, and knowledgeable audiences associate structural pieces with specific theatrical meanings, such as “the play is about to begin,” or “a good character is about to enter,” or even “now is the time when the audience members may dance.”

Western audiences are quite accustomed to using music to shape theater and dance. An opera generally begins with an overture and (as is sometimes said) “ain’t over ’til the fat lady sings.” Movie soundtrack composers wield an enormous vocabulary of stock musical gestures that can tell viewers as much about what is going on in a scene as the actors’ dialogue and actions. And ballroom dancers know instantly upon hearing the first few measures of dance tune whether it is an elegant waltz, a carefree foxtrot, or a sensual rumba, and adjust their movements and dancing style accordingly.

In Khmer court performances, the character of different pinn peat ensemble pieces, each with its own set of associations, helps set the mood for narrative dances. In some cases, there is only one piece in the entire repertory that is appropriate for a particular dramatic situation (Sam and Campbell 1991:90). In addition, the chhing cycles set the rhythmic framework for the dancers, and the drums provide aural analogues for the dance movements. The Khmer pinn peat ensemble provides music for a variety of music and theater genres. In Cambodian villages, until recent years, pinn peat ensembles accompanied plays with a religious purpose; these were masked plays, intended to gain the attention of the spirit world to prevent illness or bring rain (Sam, Roongrüang et al. 1998:190–191).

Among Melayu people in eastern Sumatra, the Malaysian peninsula, and the Riau Islands that lie between those two places, an old-

fashioned theater form call *Mak yong* similarly involves structural songs. An ensemble featuring a variety of gongs, drums, an oboe-like instrument, and a rebab (fiddle) provides a musical accompaniment which features typically Southeast Asian layers of musical functions. The musicians perform a special piece which extends a formal welcome to the spectators. Many of the scenes open with songs which the actors sing to introduce their characters' actions and motivations to the audience before they begin their spoken dialogue. Most of the *Mak yong* songs are specific to the genre and are not performed in other Melayu traditions (Yampolsky 1996:11, 18–19).

### *Martial Arts*

Throughout Southeast Asia, the practice of martial arts is often accompanied by music. Of course nobody waits for the band to begin if a situation calls for actual self-defense, but the connection of music to movement apparently is so close in Southeast Asian aesthetics that several martial arts traditions include musical accompaniment in practice and demonstrations. Martial arts dances frequently are associated with Islam because they provide sport and entertainment for students in *pesantren* (Islamic schools).

In West Java, for example, Sundanese martial arts practitioners identify two equally important aspects of *penca silat*: the *buah* (fruit), namely the practical advantages one gains from studying self-defense, and the *kembang* (flower), which refers to the aesthetically satisfying dance that grows from the practice. The *kendang penca* ensemble that accompanies *penca silat* practice and exhibitions includes two drummers, a *tarompet* (double-reed wind instrument) player, and a small gong to mark off phrases. Each of the five different named ostinato patterns (generically called *tepak*) is associated with a particular kind of dance or demonstration; there are several for displaying elegant movement combinations, one for humorous routines, and one for sparring and weapons-play.

Cambodian musician and scholar Sam-Ang Sam describes a Khmer boxing match he attended that did not include the appropriate accompanying music as “a dead event. The boxers need the music for movements in preparation for the fight, and also to guide their jumps, kicks, and jabs during the fight itself.” There is only one piece that accompa-



nies all Khmer boxing. Its two sections are an invocation to the boxers' teachers, and the fight music. The ensemble includes a sralai, sampho, and chhing (Sam and Campbell 1991:108).

### *Entertainment*

Clearly, for Southeast Asian cultures, music is a purposeful pursuit; it generally is associated with pragmatic activities (such as healing, worship, and the legitimation of political regimes) in which it serves specific and vital functions. However, purposeful music is often considered to be entertaining as well. In some cases, it is the capacity of a piece to entertain that makes it so powerfully effective; by focusing people's attention on the matters at hand, music creates a space in which social work can be accomplished. Modern globalized culture tends to regard music as a frill, as "mere" entertainment, and as a result, it can be difficult to comprehend how music can be purposeful and fun at the same time.

## **Musical Contexts: Two Case Studies**

A couple of specific examples of music traditions from opposite ends of Southeast Asia illustrate how function and entertainment are intertwined. First we examine gong-chime music from the southern Philippines, where amateur performers participate to amuse themselves through musical interaction and gain an instinctive understanding of how social interactions should be conducted in the process. Then we revisit the gong-chime ensembles of mainland Southeast Asia to explore how their style and meaning have changed in modern times.

### *Maguindanao Kulintang Music*

At the other end of Southeast Asia from the Toba Batak and courts of the Thai and Khmer kings, similar musical processes drive gong ensembles among the Islamic ethnic groups of the southern Philippines. The Maguindanao and the Maranao on the island of Mindanao, as well as the Tausug who dominate the Sulu archipelago, all play variants of

gong ensembles they call *kulintang*. The term *kulintang* (or *kolintang*) refers both to the entire ensemble and to the lead instrument—a gong chime with eight small gongs arranged in a row, which the performer strikes with two sticks.

Although *kulintang* music is sometimes used for healing ceremonies, *kulintang* performances in the southern Philippines generally take place in secular, non-religious contexts. The Maguindanao, Maranao, and Tausug have practiced Islam since the fifteenth century. Although gong ensemble music in many parts of Southeast Asia is associated with religious rituals, in keeping with Islamic ideas that music and dance are not appropriate activities for worship, southern Philippine Muslims view *kulintang* music-making as entertaining. They place value on the opportunity it provides to practice community solidarity, to learn social manners, to express one's self, and to interact with others (Cadar 1996:99–101).

The forms and processes of *kulintang* music are consistent with these social aims. As compared to Toba Batak *gondang sabangunan* music, for example, the individual parts are more equal in the sense that all the instrumentalists have the opportunity to vary their parts and bring their own personal expressions to the group music-making process. In addition, the participants often are given the opportunity to change parts. If there are more players than instruments, for example, people take turns; if one of two interlocking parts is less interesting to perform, groups might play a piece twice to give the two musicians an opportunity to change places. Very often there is a sense of competition between musicians that spices up, but rarely sullies, the sense of group solidarity.

One of the largest southern Philippine Muslim ethnic groups is the Maguindanao; their name means “people of the flooded plain,” which reflects the circumstances of their traditional homeland (a river valley) as well as their chief occupation as rice cultivators. Islam became entrenched among the Maguindanao in the fifteenth century, when a Malay missionary from Johore came to the area and established a sultanate (Anon. 2003).

Besides the *kulintang* gong chime, the Maguindanao version of the *kulintang* ensemble also includes a pair of hanging gongs with deep flanges called *agung*, a set of four hanging gongs called *gandingan*, a single hanging gong called *babandil*, and a goblet-shaped drum called *dabakan* (Kalanduyan 1996; Dris 2003).

Among the Maguindanao, kulintang performances are mostly for entertainment or secular functions. Sometimes playing kulintang music serves as a courtship activity for men and women; there are conventional ways to flirt by playing in particular fashions on the gandingan and kulintang. While musicians can be hired to perform at functions, families and friends play kulintang music for their own entertainment (Kalanduyan 1996).

Maguindanao kulintang music involves various kinds of improvisation. All of them are based on a firm ostinato foundation; nevertheless, all of the musicians have the leeway to vary their parts. Modern Maguindanao performance practice involves two styles of playing the kulintang, termed simply “old” and “new.” In each style of playing, musicians play three different named pieces. Because the actual performance involves considerable improvisation, each of the pieces can sound quite different from performance to performance. Some scholars prefer to characterize the pieces as modes instead because they represent a framework or guidelines for improvisation. What differentiates the pieces or modes (besides their names) are a set of piece-specific rhythmic patterns and accents that drive the improvisation of the individual instrumental variations.

One way of thinking about the southern Philippine approach to musical processes, then, is that it folds the principle of simultaneous variation back onto the principle of ostinato. Kulintang music also reinforces the general tendency for short ostinato patterns to hold pieces together in performance, and for specific ostinato patterns to distinguish musical functions and meanings; among the Maguindanao, for example, a fourth piece or mode is reserved for a healing ceremony (Kalanduyan 1996:17).

Kulintang performances involve the same musical processes—ostinato, variation, interlocking parts—as other Southeast Asian musics. Once again, however, these processes have been inflected to conform to cultural and social requirements. In the case of Maguindanao kulintang, the social goals of entertainment and social interaction are consistent with the players’ improvisatory approach. Compared to Toba Batak gondang sabangunan music, in which several instrumentalists are constrained to play unvarying ostinato parts to ensure the proper progress of the ceremonial activities they accompany, Maguindanao musicians value the personal expressiveness that they bring to the performance of their parts.

*Thai and Cambodian “Classical” Music in the Modern World*

The term “classical” as a musical adjective has a strange history. In its most basic meaning, classical refers to the aesthetic principles of classical Greece and Rome. Nineteenth- and twentieth-century Western musicologists came to apply the term to works composed by eighteenth-century European court composers such as Josef Haydn, who sought to restore classical ideas of balance, proportion, and rhetorical flair to their compositions; musicologists differentiated these classical compositions from the earlier seventeenth-century labyrinthine baroque court compositions and the subsequent emotionally overwrought romantic style favored by the European elite in the nineteenth century. In the twentieth century, the designation classical became a catchall category for any music patronized by the Western elite (and subsumed baroque, classical, and romantic).

In democratized European countries, classical music has become a symbol of prestige and status—of social class. Where the social order permits upward mobility, as in the United States, an appreciation for classical music provides an individual with a legitimate claim to “class.” Totalitarian regimes, such as the Soviet Union, often coopted classical music to give their own regimes the patina of legitimacy that the music bestowed on their aristocratic predecessors. The musical processes of classical music may be completely out of sync with contemporary social values, but the residual association with class gives classical music its modern significance. In other words, the value of classical music in modern Western societies is the cultural capital it carries and bestows upon anybody classy enough to appreciate it.

The term classical often is applied to Asian court music traditions, including Thai and Cambodian court music. While this may be ethnocentric, there is a certain appropriateness to this usage—not because these traditions adhere to Greek and Roman aesthetic principles, and not because they developed in the eighteenth century, but because they have long been associated with the elite class. Although the cultural values that the musical processes of Thai and Cambodian court music express—social stratification, with a god-king at the apex of this hierarchy—are out of date, these musical traditions provide their new patrons with valuable cultural capital in much the same way that classical music does for Americans.

Cambodia’s Prince Norodom Sihanouk established Cambodia as in-

dependent of France in 1949 and abolished the monarchy in 1970; his nationalistic program included state support for classical music. One expression of this support was a government-sponsored School of Fine Arts. The existence of a refined, complex artistic tradition gave Cambodia status in international venues and provided a touchstone for crystallizing a nationalist Cambodian identity. Between 1975 and 1979, Cambodia was controlled by the Khmer Rouge, led by Pol Pot, whose interpretation of communist philosophy led those in power to try to abolish social stratification by eliminating all markers of class difference. Their methods involved destroying institutions such as the School of Fine Arts and killing millions of citizens whose status or education were a threat to the project, including musicians and dancers (Sam and Campbell 1991:52; Miller 1998:90).

After the Khmer Rouge regime ended, classical music became an even more potent symbol of Cambodian identity. It remains, however, an endangered species, despite government support and the reestablishment of the School of Fine Arts. Few people have the time or resources to study classical music, and those who do must treat it as an avocation. Most of the established practitioners (some estimates are 90%) were killed, so qualified teachers are rare, and contexts for performances are few and far between (Sam and Campbell 1991:52–53). Troupes of newly trained artists have performed in Cambodia and toured abroad, however; the rebirth of Cambodian classical music from the ashes of the Khmer Rouge represents a potent symbol of hope and tenacity for Cambodian citizens.

In Thailand, too, classical music was patronized and developed in royal households; musicians were royal servants whose livelihood depended on their employers' continued sponsorship. Following the bloodless coup in 1932 that led to the adoption of a constitution and a significant decrease in royal control of the government, these households no longer had the resources to maintain their musical retinues. As David Morton puts it, "with the disintegration of the environment in which the court music flowered, the music, too, was to some degree abandoned" (Morton 1980). According to Terry Miller, the new Thai government actually suppressed classical music between the 1930s and 1950s; perhaps this music was associated too closely with the monarchy's extravagant spending (Hinton 1976:71).

In the 1960s, however, classical music reemerged, and in subsequent decades found a place in Thai educational programs. The

emerging Thai middle class especially expressed renewed interest in classical music. As with classical European music in the United States, the “classy,” royal associations of Thai classical music provided a path to upward mobility. Thai classical music’s sophistication could compete with the world’s other classical musics to serve as an expression of a Thai national identity and pride as well (Myers-Moro 1991:19).

This change in the music’s function goes hand in hand with changes in its meaning. According to Terry Miller, “though most Thai do not choose to listen to classical music (preferring, instead, the sounds emanating from radios and televisions), people acknowledge the propriety of having classical music in conjunction with ceremonies and rituals and representing their culture to the outside world” (Miller 1998: 286–287). In other words, the majority of people do not necessarily listen to, or even hear, classical music on a regular basis; rather than the music processes themselves creating meaningful experiences, a decontextualized concept of the music as a whole has become an abstract symbol of a Thai identity.

But Thai music still teaches cultural values; some Thai citizens choose to learn and perform classical music, usually as a hobby (Morton 1980). One of the cultural values one encounters in the study of classical music is acquired by interacting with a teacher. Learning to play an instrument involves the student’s assimilating a particular kind of respect for and submission to a teacher as they work together one-on-one. Modern students, of course, do not have the time or the inclination to apprentice themselves to a teacher as they might have done in the past. Students often use cassette machines to record their lessons; the tapes they make become an extension of the teacher. Pamela Myers-Moro relates a story about an older musician who actually bowed to the tape recorder that played a recording of his teacher. Technology provides a means to mediate between old and new values (Myers-Moro 1991).

In democratic Thailand, classical music’s main function is to be a symbol of Thai identity and a marker of class, good breeding, and upward mobility. The primary professional occupation open to serious students is to become a music teacher. Classical music is, in a sense, a self-replicating tradition; its only practical use is to train new teachers.

Both Thai and Cambodian classical musics developed to reflect and legitimate social stratification and divine kingship. These values are at the very heart of the musical style, as modeled by stratified polyphony

and cyclic rhythmic organization. In both cases, classical music is at best only tenuously connected to contemporary social values, and, indeed, in many ways, directly contradicts notions of democracy and equality.

Over the years, however, these classical traditions acquired new layers of meanings. They came to represent a kind of sophistication originally limited to the elite but now accessible to the middle class as well. They came to represent stability and continuity with the past—something to hold onto in rapidly changing social conditions. They came to represent “traditional” values and a shared identity which people could mobilize to make sense of their new situations, and it is these new layers of meaning that provide a context for the continued practice of classical music.

These new layers of meaning lie atop the older meanings and older values; they cover them but do not eliminate them. Traditional Thai and Cambodian values no longer explicitly include rigid social stratification or the divinity of leaders, but social stratification is still a fact of life in modern Southeast Asia. In a sense, laying denotations of national unity and democracy over classical music perfectly models how democratic and nationalist values interact with *de facto* class divisions. By regarding the whole of classical music as a symbol of nation and culture, it is possible to overlook the implications of the music’s specific musical processes, just as it is possible to overlook the systemic inequalities and injustices that continue to plague modern nations.

### Summary

The peoples and cultures of Southeast Asia are quite varied. Different historical, cultural, and political realities have shaped rich, unique societies throughout the region. Nevertheless, Southeast Asia is unified by a common environment, a set of shared historical occurrences, and by the similar solutions different groups apply to common problems. Historian Craig A. Lockard points out that Southeast Asia’s integrity as a “region” is comparable to that of the “continent” of Europe. Like Southeast Asia, the peninsula at the western end of Asia known as Europe is separated from its immediate neighbors by formidable mountains, deserts, and seas. A variety of distinctive cultures developed within the confines of Europe, on the fringes of “great” civilizations.

Nevertheless, there are enough commonalities among the peoples of Europe to consider Europe to be a discrete region (Lockard 1995:12).

Common solutions among different cultures in Southeast Asia include several fundamental musical processes, which are organically related to environmental and cultural raw materials. The easy malleability of bamboo and wood predispose these materials to be useful in musical contexts. Ecological and cultural factors conspired to make bronze a high-status, ecologically appropriate material for musical instruments. The sonorous potentials of these materials favored some musical processes—processes with layers—over others. Processes such as ostinato, simultaneous variation, interlocking parts, and the layering of contrasting fixed and free parts are consistent with indigenous Southeast Asian environmental resources and cultural values.

Layers of musical organization reflect, too, the layers of human cultures in the region. Newcomers to the region brought their own musical technologies and processes, which often were laminated onto existing musical styles. Southeast Asian musicians adopted and adapted imported instruments to fit into their ensembles. Inflections of existing processes, such as reconstruing interlocking ostinatos into expandable cycles and elaborating simultaneous variation into polyphonic stratification, acknowledged new value systems without completely discarding the old.

Over the course of months, years, and centuries, musical styles and genres accrue their own special meanings. New meanings are layered on top of old meanings, enabling a single musical genre to simultaneously convey many different messages. Court music traditions, whose musical processes can be viewed as embodiments of kingship and social inequality, can become symbols of democracy and nationalism. Gong music meant to propitiate local place spirits can find a place in Christian worship. In Southeast Asia, aesthetic activities such as music shape and reinforce cultural values, which are themselves, like the musical processes that model them, determined by responses to environment and politics.

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## *Chapter 2*

# Music in Java and Bali

Chapter One introduced some Southeast Asian musical processes and situated them in historical and cultural contexts. The remaining chapters will focus on increasingly specific topics, first by discussing music from Indonesia's most densely populated islands (Java and Bali) in Chapter Two, and zooming in on Sundanese music and dance from West Java in Chapters Three and Four. Before proceeding, however, an overview of the modern nation-state of Indonesia is in order.

Like many of Southeast Asia's modern political boundaries, Indonesia's boundaries are an artifact of European colonialism; they coincide for the most part with the extent of Dutch control during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Indonesia includes thousands of islands (some very small) and as many as 300 language and ethnic groups. Major islands include Sumatra (home of the Toba Batak and quite a few other ethnic groups), Sulawesi (formerly known as Celebes), as well as Java and Bali. Indonesia controls most of the island of Borneo (the Indonesian part is called Kalimantan) and the western half of the huge island of New Guinea (the Indonesian part was called Irian Jaya until the year 2000, when it was renamed Papua; see Figure 2.1). Many of the small islands between Bali and Papua, such as Lombok, Sumba, Sumbawa, Roti, and Timor are populated as well. Most of the populated islands are the home of multiple ethnic groups, with distinct customs, languages, and belief systems. Nevertheless, these groups are, in many respects, united as Indonesians.

One of the reasons The Netherlands is such a wealthy country today is that it exploited the natural resources and agricultural potential of its "East Indies" colonies, reaping huge profits by utilizing the inexpensive labor the native population provided. Regardless of ethnic affiliations, then, every Indonesian shares the legacy of centuries of Dutch colonial exploitation and administration; this shared experience is a

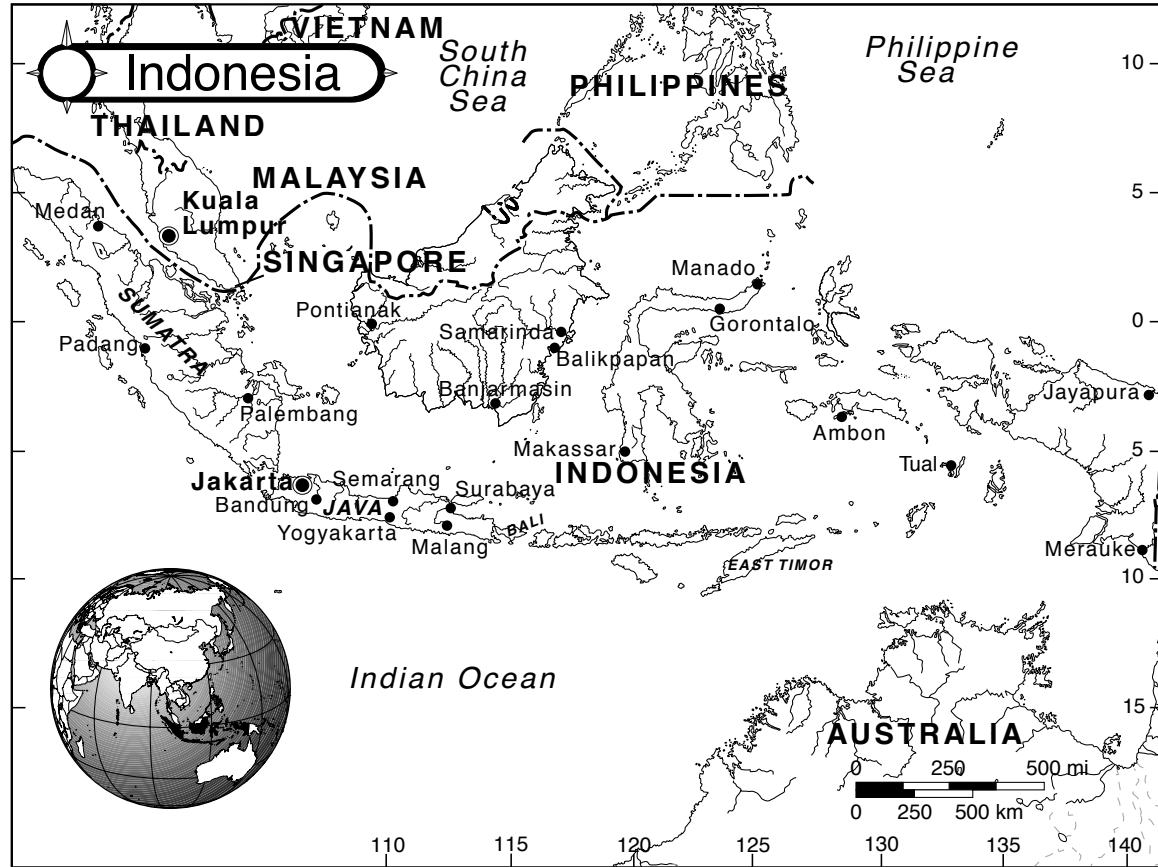


Figure 2.1. Major islands of Indonesia (maps.com)

powerful unifier despite the cultural and geographical heterogeneity of the islands. Not all Indonesians believe that being part of Indonesia is a good thing for their particular region. East Timor, for example, resisted being subsumed into the Indonesian nation, and there are secession movements in Aceh (in northern Sumatra) and Papua as well. Advocates of separation believe that their local resources are filling the coffers of the central government (located on Java) without benefiting their own regions.

One way to prevent secession movements is to forge a national Indonesian culture—to make being an Indonesian citizen important to each individual who lives within the borders, regardless of his or her ethnic affiliation. The Indonesian government has developed a cultural policy that emphasizes shared artistic values in diverse regional traditions.

These new national meanings supplement the existing local and regional meanings to add yet another layer of complexity to Indonesian music. With its own layers of cultural influence, layers of musical processes, and layers of accrued meanings, Indonesia is something of a microcosm of Southeast Asia as a whole.

This chapter will examine how selected Indonesian gamelan traditions which manifest these common processes reflect also their own local histories and cultures. Of Indonesia's approximately 17,500 islands, Java and Bali are the best known to people outside of Indonesia. This chapter concentrates on these two islands, following a trajectory from west to east—starting on the northwest coast of Java in Cirebon, moving to Central Java, through East Java, to Bali, and even beyond to briefly examine Javanese and Balinese gamelan music's penetration into North America and Europe. Chapters Three and Four will return to West Java for a more detailed look at gamelan and dance traditions of the Sundanese people who live there.

The staggering variety of musical forms packed onto the two small islands of Java and Bali is a microcosm of the historical processes and diversity of Southeast Asia as a whole and Indonesia in particular. Contemporary Javanese and Balinese musics reflect the layers of cultural influences that are the legacy of the whole region—early inhabitants and invasions; Indic (Hindu and Buddhist) missionization; the coming of Islam; Portuguese, Dutch, and British colonialism; nationalism; and globalization.

The name “Java” is perhaps most famous in the West not as the name of an Indonesian island, but rather as the name of a computer programming language and as a slang word for coffee. The three usages are vaguely related—the programming language was given the name “java” to indicate that it was speedy, like someone who drinks too much coffee. And people began to use the word “java” to mean “coffee” because a lot of coffee was exported to the West from the Indonesian archipelago via the island of Java (some Dutch merchants long ago smuggled a coffee tree seedling from Arabia and found Java to be a place conducive to its cultivation, thus breaking an Arabian “monopoly” on the beans).

Java’s significance in Indonesia stems from its population and political influence, which are, in part, the legacy of its important role in the coffee and spice trade. Its area of 51,007 square miles (132,618 square kilometers), about the size of North Carolina, makes it only the third largest island in the archipelago (the Indonesian islands of Sumatra and Kalimantan are larger). It has by far the largest population of any island in Indonesia—121 million (59 percent of the total population of Indonesia), according to the 2000 census (Statistik 2000). Indonesia’s three largest cities (the national capital, Jakarta, with 10.8 million; Bandung with 3.8 million; and Surabaya with 2.7 million) are on Java (World Gazetteer 2002). Java was the center of several influential Southeast Asian empires—notably the Majapahit (thirteenth–sixteenth century) and the second Mataram (sixteenth–seventeenth century) kingdoms, and became the administrative center of the colonial Dutch East Indies and of the modern Indonesian nation as well.

Bali’s claim to fame, in contrast, lies not in its size nor its political significance. It is a tiny island of only 2,147 square miles (5,582 square kilometers), about the size of Delaware, and has a total population of 3.1 million (Statistik 2000)—smaller than two of Java’s cities! However, it boasts an international reputation as a paradise. Many people conflate Bali with the mythical South Pacific island named Bali H’ai created by James Michener in his book *Tales of the South Pacific* (and immortalized in song by Rodgers and Hammerstein for *South Pacific*, their play based on Michener’s stories). The real Bali is thousands of miles away from the islands that inspired Michener; its reputation as a paradise is no less vivid, however. In the 1920s and 1930s several influential European and American anthropologists and artists, including Margaret Mead, Gregory Bateson, Walter Spies, and Colin McPhee, took



Figure 2.2. Map of Java and Bali

up residence there and regaled their readers with tales of Bali's warm climate, natural beauty, and artistic populace. The Indonesian government has capitalized on this reputation and continues to develop Bali as an international tourist destination. Figure 2.2 is a map of Java and Bali, with the locations marked for some of the places discussed later in the chapter.

Common features and organizational principles in musical traditions from different parts of Java and Bali point to some common origins. But the great variety in musical expression points to the different social, cultural, and political situations that different populations on the islands have experienced. This chapter will survey some representative musical traditions from Java and Bali and situate them both within a common historical and cultural context and in relation to one another. Examination of musical examples from these different traditions will illuminate common strategies as well as differences.

With regard to musical technology, Java and Bali have much in common with the rest of Southeast Asia. Many Javanese and Balinese musical instruments are made from a variety of readily available materials, such as bamboo and wood. The most prestigious instruments, however, are made of metal, usually bronze. Ensembles of bronze instruments, called *gamelan*, are one common feature of music throughout Java and Bali; the form of the instruments and the makeup of the ensembles, however, varies considerably from place to place. Another common characteristic of Javanese and Balinese music is the way in which it is organized into musical "layers" that remain distinct from one another yet combine to create a harmonious whole. Although the musical details of the layers themselves differ from one tradition to another, each layer serves one of four basic musical functions, and most traditions include all four functions. One final common characteristic: musicians



throughout Java and Bali memorize pieces in a condensed format, like an outline, which they flesh out at the time of performance. The pieces themselves, however, are quite different from tradition to tradition, as are the techniques by which the musicians expand them. An historical overview of Java and Bali helps to explain both the commonalities and the differences.

### Brief Historical Sketch

Based on fossil evidence, archaeologists believe that humans have lived on the island of Java for one and a half million years (Lockard 1995:14). The current residents of Java, however, are not the direct descendants of the *homo erectus* population of prehistoric Java. Genetic, linguistic, and archaeological evidence suggests instead that the modern populations of Java and Bali descend from a wave of immigrants, originally from South China and Taiwan, who spread throughout island Southeast Asia, eventually reaching the coast of mainland Southeast Asia and the islands of Polynesia. This prehistoric movement of people is called the Austronesian expansion. It seems likely that these invaders, who reached Java in approximately 2000 BC, displaced or assimilated any existing populations. Ironically, the “original” Austronesians in South China and Taiwan were themselves displaced by the dominant Northern Chinese; their descendants survive today only as marginal aboriginal populations on Taiwan (Diamond 1999:334–353).

The subsequent history of Java and Bali involves wave after wave of foreign invasions; these later invaders, however, did not displace the Austronesian descendants as they had displaced their predecessors. Instead, they assimilated with the Austronesian Javanese. These later invaders contributed ways of thinking and strategies for living rather than genetic material; each new wave imprinted new ideas and concepts on top of the old ones.

Some of these early visitors, probably from northern Vietnam, brought bronze objects and technology in about 300 BC (Hood 1980:122), and possibly rice cultivation technology as well (Koentjaraningrat 1975:11). Among the artifacts associated with this wave were items that archaeologists call “bronze drums” because they appear to be tools for producing sound (Hood 1980:122), and perhaps for making rain (Kunst 1973:105). By 300 AD Javanese metalworkers had developed the imported technology of bronze casting and forging

and created new types of artifacts, including bronze gongs with central knobs on them (Hood 1980:122).

Hindu missionaries from India first arrived in the fourth (Koentjaraningrat 1975:13) or fifth (Kunst 1973:106) centuries AD. Javanese rulers soon adopted the trappings of Indian culture, including a concept of kingly rule that identified the monarch as a descendent of the gods whose primary responsibility was to preserve cosmic order by imitating it in the administration of his kingdom (Koentjaraningrat 1975:16; Osborne 1985:22). Indian Buddhist ideas also came to Java during the first millennium; over the course of time, the Javanese blended characteristics of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Javanese animistic practices into a uniquely Javanese religious system (Wright 1978:5–6). For example, uniquely Javanese versions of the Hindu epic stories *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* emerged, which were not only recast in Javanese tongues but supplemented with new Javanese characters.

The last Hindu-Buddhist kingdoms on Java were Pajajaran (1333–1579) in West Java and Majapahit (1293–1514) in Central Java. Islam first took root in Java along the north coast; Islamic teachers adapted existing arts to help spread the new religion to other parts of Java. Islamic North Coast kingdoms managed to overthrow Majapahit, forcing Hindu aristocrats into exile on Bali. Another Islamic kingdom, called Mataram, rose to dominate Java in the sixteenth century; the royal courts of the powerful Mataram empire, based in Central Java, developed music and arts as symbols of their power and influence.

A European presence in Indonesia began with Portuguese traders in the early sixteenth century. It was Dutch colonial powers, however, which eventually dominated the spice trade from the island of Java. The Dutch maintained Mataram's aristocrats as local administrators for their colony, but factionalized them; out of this internal bickering grew several different royal courts. While the aristocrats of Java emulated many of the trappings of European royalty, they also cultivated practices that distinguished them from their European overlords. The different Central Javanese courts, in fact, stripped of any significant political power, competed with one another primarily in the arena of the arts. People in outlying areas, far from the center, emulated these court arts, and adapted them to suit local needs and purposes.

During World War II, the Dutch were displaced from their role as colonial masters of the Indonesian archipelago by the Japanese, who took control of many parts of Southeast Asia. Indonesian nationalists took the opportunity of Japan's defeat in World War II in 1945 to de-

clare an independent Indonesian nation. Although the Dutch attempted to regain control, Indonesia's independence was widely recognized, and by 1949 the Dutch withdrew.

The boundaries of modern Indonesia do not coincide with any particular cultural or linguistic divisions; they are artifacts of Dutch control. Indonesia's national motto, *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (Old Javanese for "unity in diversity") capsulizes the modern Indonesian nation's strategy for instilling a sense of common patriotism in a conglomeration of cultures brought together originally only by the accident of Dutch colonization.

The linchpin of a pan-Indonesian culture is the national language (which English-speakers call Indonesian, but which Indonesians call *bahasa Indonesia*). Virtually all Indonesians speak this national language, which is used in schools, government offices, and mass media. It is one very important manifestation of the "unity" part of the slogan.

The "diversity" part of the motto is reflected in the fact that Indonesian is a second language for most Indonesians, who typically speak some regional language as their first tongue. There are hundreds of these regional languages, which very often reflect older political, social, and cultural boundaries, allegiances, and identities. In Central and Eastern Java, the areas once dominated by the Majapahit kingdom, most people speak the Javanese language. In many parts of West Java, especially those areas formerly under the control of the Pajajaran empire, the dominant language is Sundanese. On the north coast, between West and Central Java, where a distinct political entity emerged with the coming of Islam in the fifteenth century, many people speak a Javanese dialect known as Cirebonese. In some isolated pockets of East Java, locals speak a dialect of Javanese, called *bahasa Osing*, that most speakers of standard Javanese can barely understand. The language around the national capital city of Jakarta is a mix of Malay and a host of local languages, reflecting the diversity of its residents, many of whom relocated to the Jakarta area in search of economic opportunities.

### *Origins of Gamelan*

In his book *Music of the Roaring Sea* (Hood 1980), ethnomusicologist Mantle Hood weaves a fanciful fictionalized account of how a Javanese chieftain might have acquired and developed an ensemble of bronze

drums in 300 BC. Hood's fictionalized chieftain was initially terrified by the supernatural sounds he heard emanating from the ships of an invader; eventually, however, he found a way to vanquish the invader and seize the bronze drums (along with the musicians who played them) as his own. Hood suggests that the bronze drums' obvious supernatural power, along with several very practical uses to which they were put as signalling devices, led to their adoption and development on Java, and eventually to the cultivation of bronze instrument making and the creation of modern gamelan music.

However it happened in reality, bronze percussion ensembles have played an important role in the cultures of Java and Bali for thousands of years. In kingdoms all over the world, ritual objects were (and are) an important symbol of the "divine right" to rule (consider the crown jewels of England, for example). Medieval Hindu-Javanese kingdoms, too, had their share of heirloom crowns and gems. Their collection of ritual objects that symbolized the legitimacy to rule included musical ensembles consisting primarily of metal percussion instruments—*gamelan*. Javanese especially valued weapons and utensils made of bronze—not only because of their superior utility, but because of bronze's supernatural associations, which stemmed from the metal's origins in elemental substances (metal ores) and elemental forces (fire). In addition, the music played on the instruments mimicked the cosmic order of the universe; the very act of having it performed was one way in which Javanese kings fulfilled their obligation to preserve cosmic order. Different cultures and groups on Java have found ways to change gamelan music to fill new niches and perform new functions, combining the old with the new. The following sections will describe some of these metamorphoses.

### Java's Islamic North Coast

Java's north coast has long been the location of the island's international ports; Islamic traders from West Asia used routes that pass by Java's north-coast ports on their way to China since the earliest days of Islam. It is not known exactly how or why any residents of Java converted to Islam, but it seems unlikely that it was because of any sort of coercion or conquest by Islamic traders or forces. What is clear is that Islam first made a significant impact in Java among Javanese beginning in the sixteenth century in some of the cosmopolitan north-coast cities.

Legend, supported to some extent by historical documentation, holds that a small cadre of charismatic Javanese individuals, usually called the *wali sanga* (nine saints), was primarily responsible for spreading Islam in Java. They also established powerful Islamic states based along the northern coast of Java and eventually overthrew the last of the Hindu-Javanese kingdoms, establishing Islam as Java's predominant religion. The rulers of these states eventually assumed Islamic royal titles such as *sultan*, while simultaneously maintaining many of the Hindu-Javanese notions of king and cosmos, and thus became the embodiment of a peculiarly Javanese combination of indigenous, Indic, and Islamic ideas.

Initially, the most powerful of the north-coast Islamic states was Demak (in eastern Java). It was eventually overshadowed by its satellite state at the western end of Java, Banten. A third city, Cirebon, located about halfway between Banten and Demak, also became the capital of an important kingdom. Of the three, only Cirebon retains any vital remnants in the present of this glorious past in the form of several palaces, called *kraton*, which are still home to the royal descendents of the rulers of Cirebon—the sultans and their families.

The residents of Cirebon hold that the Cirebon kingdom was founded by one of the nine saints, Sunan Gunung Jati, who was the only wali to become a king (Suanda 1999:686). Sunan Gunung Jati acquired some rank in Demak by marrying a relative of its powerful ruler; he subsequently established himself as the king of the then-new north coast state of Banten (at the western end of Java) in 1526; some years later he moved to Cirebon and assumed the Islamic royal title of Sultan (Ricklefs 1993).

One of the reasons the nine saints succeeded in their missionary efforts was their keen sense of how to insinuate Islamic ideas into the already existing sociopolitical fabric of Hindu-Javanese kingdoms. It was important to the leaders of the new Islamic kingdoms to establish legitimacy to rule in a way that their subjects could understand. One means for accomplishing this was to appropriate the symbols of the divine right to rule, including gamelan ensembles. The people of Cirebon believe that the traditional arts were created by the nine saints; for this reason the traditional arts in Cirebon are considered to have Islamic significance despite their obvious roots in pre-Islamic Javanese arts (Suanda 1999:687). It is a testament to the success of the nine saints in integrating Islam into a Javanese way of life as well as a clear illustration of a Javanese penchant for layering the new on top of the old.

### *Gamelan Sekaten*

There are legends that suggest that three heirloom sets of gamelan instruments were taken from Majapahit for the purposes of transferring the Majapahit rulers' legitimacy upon their north-coast conquerors when the north coast states overthrew Majapahit in the sixteenth century. Other stories suggest that the nine saints manufactured the sets after Majapahit models (cf. Surjodiningrat 1971:1). Both versions emphasize that gamelan ensembles and gamelan music provided continuity with the past to ensure a transfer of divine authority to the new Islamic rulers.

It was the Muslim king of Demak who began the tradition of having the heirloom gamelan played during a festival honoring the birthday of the prophet Muhammed as a means for attracting his Javanese subjects to Islam by conflating the trappings of Hindu-Javanese authority and legitimacy—gamelan music—and the attractive power of a festival with Islamic personages and ideals (Pemberton 1994:96). These heirloom gamelan are known today as *gamelan sekaten* or *gamelan sekati* and the festival at which they are played is called *sekaten*. People in Cirebon consider gamelan sekaten to be the most Islamic type of gamelan (Suanda 1999:687).

Gamelan sekaten is a good starting point for discussing Indonesian gamelan music for several reasons. Because of its great age, we can imagine that its musical style is reminiscent of pre-Islamic gamelan music. Its musical structure provides some insight into how gamelan music might mimic the organization of the cosmos. Many of the musical principles that govern sekaten music are apparent in more modern gamelan styles. And, finally, the instrumentation of Cirebon gamelan sekaten represents a "generic" gamelan ensemble in some significant ways.

### *Gamelan Instruments*

The term "gamelan" is thought to come from the Javanese word *gamel*, which means "to handle," in the sense of managing or presenting something (Sumarsam 1995:319–320 fn. 5); in other words, the term "gamelan" might suggest the process of making gamelan music, which involves treating or handling a basic musical idea. The word "gamel" also refers to a type of hammer (Kunst 1973; Lindsay 1979:9). This term is particularly appropriate for the metal percussion instruments

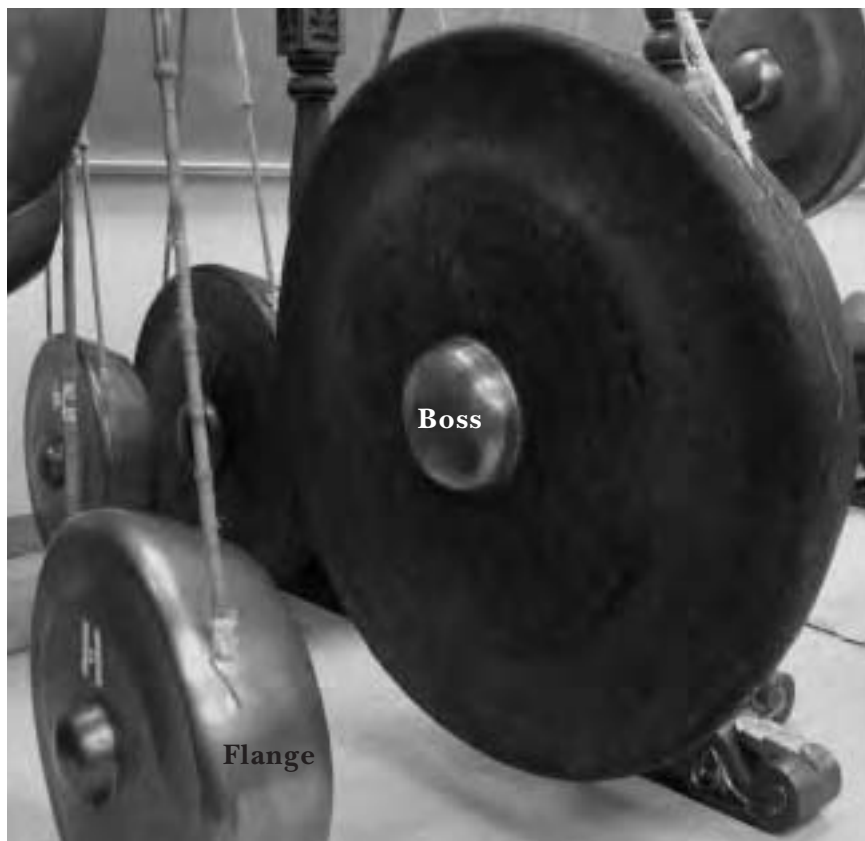


Figure 2.3. Bossed (knobbed) gong; a large Central Javanese gong *ageng* surrounded by a number of smaller *kempul* (Henry Spiller)

that dominate gamelan ensembles because it suggests how the instruments are played (they are hit with some sort of hammer or mallet) as well as how the instruments are made (they are hot-forged and hammered into shape). Some Javanese musicians divide bronze gamelan instruments into two basic categories: *pencon* (or *penclon*; instruments composed of bossed or knobbed gongs) and *wilahan* (instruments with bronze slab keys) (Kartomi 1990:89; Sorrell 1990:28–29; see also Sutton 1999:640–641).

#### *Knobbed Gong (Pencon) Instruments*

Generally speaking, a gong is a metal percussion instrument that has a circular flat surface; sometimes the edge of the surface is turned over to form a “lip” or a “flange.” Usually flat gongs do not have a definite pitch;





Figure 2.4. Gong chimes in Museum Prabu Geusan Ulun in Sumedang.  
Left: *jengglong*; right: *bonang* (Henry Spiller)

an example is the large flat gong that is sometimes played in symphony orchestras, called a *tam-tam*. When hit, a tam-tam makes a raucous, jangling sound; most people would find it impossible to hum or sing a single pitch that emerges from the tam-tam. Southeast Asian gongsmiths learned a long time ago that adding a raised knob called a “boss” to the center of the flat circular surface helps to focus the gong’s pitch (see Figure 2.3); musicians hit the gong on the boss with some sort of padded mallet to produce a sound with a pitch that is much more clearly identifiable than that of a tam-tam. In Indonesia, the term *pencon* (or *penclon*) refers to these bosses and to gongs that have such bosses.

A variety of Indonesian musical instruments are made from one or more bossed gongs. Gongs can be suspended horizontally from ropes and struck from the side, or laid vertically on their flanges over ropes and struck from above. The thickness of the gong’s various surfaces, along with its size and weight, determines its pitch; the softness or hardness of the mallet with which it is struck affects its *timbre* (the quality or “color” of the sound). Sometimes the lips of Indonesian gongs are very deep, and the instrument looks more like an overturned kettle or pot.

A bossed gong instrument may consist of a single large (or small) gong. Very often, however, a series of gongs with different pitches is arranged on a frame to create a *gong chime*, which usually is played as a melodic instrument (see Figure 2.4). Sometimes the players of gongs





Figure 2.5. *Keyed instruments from a Cirebonese gamelan accompanying topeng.*  
*Left to right: peking, saron, saron (courtesy Michael Ewing)*

and gong chimes stop a gong's vibrations after striking it by firmly pressing the mallet back onto the boss, or by touching it to damp the vibrations.

#### *Slab Key (Wilahan) Instruments*

Slab key instruments consist of four to fifteen or more rectangular metal bars (called "keys" in English and *wilahan* in Indonesian) arranged left-to-right, from largest to smallest (so that the lowest pitch is on the player's left and the highest pitch is on the player's right) on top of some sort of stand or frame. The frame also usually provides some sort of resonating chamber—an enclosed space under a key that helps to amplify the key's sound by reflecting and reinforcing its vibrations—as well. Musicians hit the keys with a mallet or hammer; the timbre depends in a large part on the hardness or softness of the mallet. Because the keys are made of metal, the resulting sound can ring on for quite some time. For this reason, most of the time musicians also stop or damp the sound of the ringing key by firmly pinching or touching the key until it stops vibrating (see Figure 2.5).

Bossed gong and slab key instruments in Java and Bali come in a variety of types, shapes, sizes, and pitch levels, with different numbers of



Figure 2.6. *Kyahi Mega Mendung* (Cirebonese gamelan in the Museum Sonobudoyo in Yogyakarta) (Henry Spiller)

keys or gongs and ranges, different kinds of resonators, and different playing techniques, all of which result in a surprising variety of timbres. In gamelan ensembles, the keyed and gong instruments of various sizes and shapes are given some semblance of a uniform appearance by mounting them on stands with shared decorative motifs and paint colors.

Sundanese and Javanese musicians sometimes emphasize the integrity and unity of these sets of instruments by bestowing a proper name upon them. Each set of gamelan instruments has a unique character based on its sound as well as its appearance. In the courts of Central Java, gamelan names often begin with the honorific title *Kyahi* (often translated into English as “The Venerable” or “Sir”) followed by a poetic combination of words rich with symbolic associations, for example, *Kyahi Guntur Madu* (“The Venerable Rush of Honey”). Some gamelan names evoke the particular quality of the ensemble’s collective voice, such as *Kyahi Udan Mas* (“The Venerable Golden Rain”). A gamelan originally from Cirebon, but now kept in the Museum Sonobudoyo in Yogyakarta is named *Kyahi Mega Mendung* (see Figure 2.6). This poetic image—dark storm clouds—evokes not only the gamelan’s sound, but its appearance as well. The instrument cases have intricate carving

Figure 2.7. *Mega mendung batik motif*  
(Source: Batik Patterns. 1999.  
Boston: Shambhala Publications)

based on one of Cirebon's emblematic *batik* (wax-resist dyed cloth with intricate patterns) motifs, also called *mega mendung* (see Figure 2.7); it symbolizes life-giving rain (Tim Yayasan Mitra Budaya Indonesia 1982:149), and also provided its original owner, a princess from Cirebon who married into a Yogyanese royal family, a nostalgic reminder of home. In West Java, gamelan names often include the more intimate honorific "Si," such as *Si Manis* ("Dear Sweet One").

One of the most important qualities that distinguishes one set of gamelan instruments from other is its tuning. Instrument makers carefully tune each instrument in a gamelan to match the others, and it is only rarely possible to exchange instruments between gamelan. Despite this uniqueness, individual gamelan tunings follow the general outlines of one of two main tuning systems.

### *Tuning Systems*

Something must vibrate for humans to hear a sound; the quality of sound that depends on how fast or slowly something vibrates is called *pitch*. Westerners generally relate pitches to one another not by thinking of them as "faster" or "slower," however, but rather as "higher" or "lower." When one pitch vibrates exactly twice as fast as another pitch, a curious thing happens; although one pitch is perceived to be much higher than the other, the two pitches are nevertheless heard to be somehow "the same." The musical distance delimited by these two pitches is called an *octave* in the West.



Although there are arguably an infinite number of discrete pitches within the span of a single octave, most musical systems do not make use of all of these infinite pitches. Musicians and listeners limit themselves to a much smaller set of discrete pitches, along with standards for varying and adjusting those pitches (these standards are generally called *intonation*). We typically evaluate musicians by how accurately they conform to our expectations for intonation (there are few judgments that challenge a performer's basic musicianship skills more than declaring, "She plays out of tune"!).

The human voice, along with some instruments (such as a violin), is capable of producing infinitesimal gradations of pitch; other instruments, however, are permanently set to a limited number of discrete pitches. Each key on a piano, for example, is tuned to exactly one pitch more or less permanently. Although there are eighty-eight keys on a standard piano, there are only twelve keys (and twelve discrete pitches) within each octave span on the piano. The relationship among the pitches to which those twelve keys are tuned is the piano's *tuning system*. The term for the distance between any two pitches is *interval*. Because the interval between any two adjacent piano keys is tuned to sound exactly the same as the interval between any other pair of adjacent keys, we can call the piano's tuning system a *twelve-pitch equidistant tuning system*; in other words, the octave is divided into twelve intervals, each of which we perceive as being the same size as the others.

A tuning system provides a basic pitch vocabulary, but not all the pitches need to be included in every piece. The keys on a piano, for example, can be divided into two basic categories: "white keys" which are the larger keys in front, and "black keys" which are narrower, shorter, and further back. Much conventional Western music uses only a subset of these keys at any given time; the piano's "white keys," of which there are only seven per octave, represent one of the fundamental subsets of pitches that Western music uses; one possible term for a subset of a tuning system is *scale*. The piano's white-key scale has two different sizes of intervals; the larger intervals are twice as large as the smaller intervals (because the larger intervals are the sum of two of the intervals created by the twelve-pitch equidistant tuning system). We therefore can call this subset of piano keys a *seven-pitch non-equidistant scale* (it is more commonly called a *diatonic* scale, however, which denotes a particular kind of seven-pitch non-equidistant scale in which there are two small intervals and five large intervals, and the small intervals are not close to each other).

One system for measuring and comparing intervals is called the Ellis “cents” system, developed by the nineteenth-century phonetician Alexander Ellis. He began with the piano’s twelve-pitch equidistant tuning system and mentally divided each of the intervals into 100 infinitesimal pieces, called cents. Thus, a complete octave contains 1,200 cents. The pitch difference in a 1-cent interval is too small for most human ears and brains to perceive, but most people can distinguish between two notes that are a few cents apart. Expressed using cents, the two small intervals of the piano white key scale are each 100 cents; the five large intervals are each 200 cents.

### *Javanese Tuning Systems*

Like the keys of a piano, each of the gongs or keys on bronze gamelan instruments is tuned more or less permanently to a discrete pitch. Most bronze ensembles in Java and Bali are tuned to a variant of one of two main tuning systems, called *pelog* and *slendro* (spelled *salendro* in the Sundanese language). *Pelog* is a seven-pitch non-equidistant tuning system; that is, the intervals between the seven *pelog* pitches vary in size from very small (about 90 cents) to very large (more than 400 cents). *Slendro* is a five-pitch equidistant tuning system; that is, the intervals between the five *slendro* pitches are approximately the same size (1200 cents divided by 5 equals 240 cents).

The white keys on any piano are tuned exactly the same as on all other pianos, because all piano tuners use a single standard to tune each note. There are standards both for determining the pitch of each note (for example, the standard pitch for the key labelled “A” near the middle of the piano keyboard is 440 vibrations per second) as well as for the intervals between each note (how much higher or lower one note is compared to another).

Javanese gamelan tuners, however, do not adhere to a single standard, either for pitch or for the size of intervals, but instead strive to give each set of gamelan instruments they tune a unique version of *slendro* or *pelog*. Because the instruments are always played as a set, unlike Western instruments which are interchangeable from one ensemble to another, intonation differences between gamelan sets present few practical problems. Those who listen to gamelan music, in fact, appreciate the intonation differences between one gamelan and another. Each set of instruments imparts its own subtle character into all the pieces the musicians play on it. The exact boundaries between

what sounds acceptably “in tune” and what sounds “out of tune” are difficult to nail down, and are the subject of much passionate discussion among Javanese musicians.

So, although both the piano white keys and pelog are seven-pitch non-equidistant tuning systems, they are really quite different. That being said, it is possible to internalize a crude approximation of how the pelog tuning system sounds by comparing it to a piano’s diatonic (“white-key”) scale. Many people can sing a diatonic scale using traditional solfège syllables—*do re mi fa sol la ti do* (and those who cannot do so already can learn quickly by watching the first half-hour of the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical *The Sound of Music*). Remember, however, that this represents a very crude approximation. If there is one certainty about Javanese tunings, it is this: The “do-re-mi” diatonic scale sounds absolutely *awful* as pelog.

### *Gamelan Sekaten in Cirebon*

Cirebonese gamelan sekaten are tuned to a version of this basic seven-pitch pelog scale. And, like most gamelan ensembles, gamelan sekaten include both wilahan and pencon instruments. The pencon instruments include two large hanging gongs (called *gong*), a large one-row gong chime called *bonang*, and a small, horizontal gong called *ketuk* or *kajar*. The wilahan instruments are of two sizes; the larger, lower-pitched ones are called *demung*, while the smaller, higher-pitched one is called *titil*. The ensemble is filled out with a flat, unbossed gong called *beri*, *cret*, or *kecrek*. There also is one non-bronze instrument: a large drum called *bedug* (Kunst and Kunst-van Wely 1923:35; North 1988:4,5) (see Figure 2.8).

The names of many Indonesian musical instrument are onomatopoeic in that they are verbal imitations of both the timbre of the instruments and the style in which they are played. The name “gong,” for example, is a verbal imitation of the sound a large, low-pitched gong makes when it is struck and allowed to ring. Similarly, the second syllable of the name “ketuk” (that is, “tuk”) evokes the sound a higher-pitched gong makes when struck and damped. The “i” vowels and “t” consonants in the name “titil” suggest the delicate, high-pitched, and relatively fast-moving melody of the instrument it describes, while the “u” vowel and “m” and “ng” consonants in “demung” capture the more



*Figure 2.8. Sekaten instruments from the Kraton Kasepuhan  
(photo and print collection of the Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal,  
Land- en Volkenkunde, Leiden, Netherlands)*

grandiose sound of the larger keyed instrument. “Cret” and “crek” imitate the crashing sound of the cymbal-like kecrek, while “dug” captures the thumping quality of the large bedug drum’s booming low voice.

Even when they are played all together at the same time, each instrument’s unique voice and individual sonic personality are clearly audible. As is the case with much gamelan music, Cirebonese gamelan sekaten pieces have several distinct layers; each layer has a different musical function. The distinctive timbres of each of the instruments (as reflected in their names) contribute to the listener’s ability to perceive and distinguish the various layers. The following discussion will illustrate the basic layers of gamelan music using a Cirebonese gamelan sekaten piece as an example by constructing, layer by layer, a “timeline” for the piece.

By virtue of their majestic sound and especially honored status, the large gongs are assigned the role of regularly marking off the passage of rather large chunks of musical time; the timeline in Figure 2.9 represents one such chunk that is thirty-two seconds long. It is quite difficult for humans to accurately measure a chunk of time as long as thirty-two seconds without somehow dividing it into smaller, more



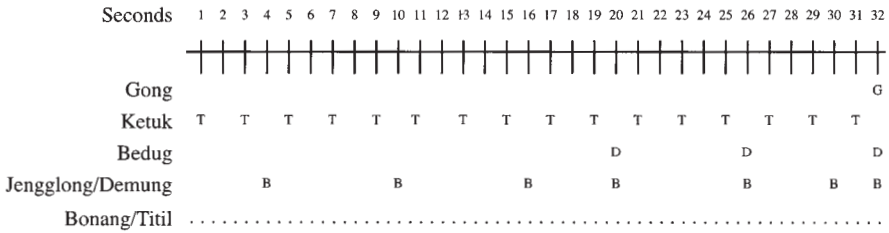


Figure 2.9. Colotomic timeline for “Lagu Sekaten”

manageable units. The ketuk’s sharp attack and quick decay make it an ideal instrument for marking off appropriately smaller units of time. In the timeline, the ketuk sounds on the odd-numbered seconds—sixteen times before the gong stroke. Together, these two instrumental sounds act as a foundation for the other instruments’ parts; they quite literally lay out a timeline for the other instruments. Ethnomusicologists sometimes call this sort of foundation or timeline, in which regular time periods are delineated by punctuating sounds, a *colotomic form* or *colotomy*. These terms are based on the Greek word for a unit of rhythm (*colon*) and the Greek-derived suffixes for something that cuts or divides into sections (*-tomy* or *-tomic*).

Most gamelan ensembles also include instruments other than bronze percussion instruments. Cirebonese gamelan sekaten includes a large drum, called bedug, which is struck in a less regular pattern than the colotomic bronze instruments; its strokes are concentrated near the gong stroke. This quickening of activity toward the end of the time period helps build expectations about the impending gong stroke and shape the arbitrary time period into a musical phrase with a beginning, middle, and end. Judith Becker calls this kind of drum pattern a *configurative* drum pattern because of its role in creating a sense of musical direction (Becker 1968:180). This is a common role for drums in gamelan music.

In some gamelan ensembles, drums provide other functions beyond this configurative role as well. It is usually the responsibility of the drummer in a gamelan ensemble to coordinate all the rhythmic activity—speeding up, slowing down, beginning or ending a piece, or transitioning to some other piece. In addition, drum patterns often accentuate and enhance any kind of movement that the gamelan may accompany, such as dance or puppet manipulation, by providing an



aural analog for the dancers' or puppets' gestures. Some ethnomusicologists compare the drummer's role in a gamelan ensemble to that of a conductor in Western orchestral music, because a drummer, like a conductor, sets the tempos and helps the other musicians coordinate their parts. Unlike a conductor, however, a drummer in a gamelan ensemble leads with aural signals rather than hand-waving; the mark of a good drummer is his unobtrusiveness, not his flamboyance.

The remaining instruments play simultaneous variations of the piece's melody (n.b.: the melody's rhythm is notated in Figure 2.9, but not its notes). The lower-pitched instruments (jengglong and demung) play versions of the melody that are very simple—only seven notes in the example. The versions played by the higher-pitched instruments (bonang and titil) are, by comparison, very elaborate. They are considered to be different versions of the same melody because they land on the same pitches at regular time intervals. The simplified version, played by the lower-pitched instruments, includes only the melody's most essential contours. The more elaborate versions, played by the higher-pitched instruments, have a lot more notes, but follow the same essential contour as the simpler version.

The two parts might be compared to a person walking a dog. The human is likely to move ahead at a steady pace, while a dog typically will race ahead, run back and forth, or linger behind for a moment before racing on ahead again. The dog's mileage is significantly greater than the human's, but both walk the same path, cover the same ground, and arrive at the same destination at the same time; the difference is that the human walks like a human and the dog walks like a dog. Similarly, the jengglong player and the bonang player perform the same melody and arrive at the same melodic junctures at the same time, but the jengglong part proceeds like a jengglong part (slowly) and the bonang part proceeds like a bonang part (more quickly, covering more musical ground).

The musical texture that results from the simultaneous presentation of different versions of a single melody moving at different densities can be called *polyphonic stratification*. As discussed in Chapter One, the term *polyphonic* suggests multiple parts, while *stratification* suggests that the parts are layered on top of each other like strata of rock in geological formations where clearly delineated sheets of different kinds of rock are layered on top of one another. The different parts—the various “strata”—played on Cirebonese gamelan sekaten instruments can

be grouped into four functional layers: (1) foundation/colotomic; (2) simplified/abstracted melody, (3) elaborated/varied melody, and (4) drum patterns that shape the phrases, coordinate rhythmic activity, and synchronize the music with other activities such as dance. These four functions combine to create a stratified musical texture.

Sekaten pieces, like many gamelan pieces, are cyclical in the sense that the pattern represented by the timeline can be repeated many times (in theory, indefinitely). Due to their ceremonial nature, sekaten pieces are, in fact, cycled many, many times during a performance. To ensure that the musicians get a chance to rest, one of the musicians keeps track of how many cycles have been performed with the aid of a board with twenty-five holes drilled in it (like a cribbage board). After three gong cycles, a peg is advanced one hole; when the peg gets to the twenty-fifth hole (seventy-five cycles!) it is time to end the piece and take a break (Dapperen 1933:157).

When it was founded, Cirebon had only one *kraton* (royal palace) and one ruler. Over the years, the kingdom was split several times. The first such split, in 1677, divided the kingdom between two brothers and resulted in two kraton: Kasepuhan (which means “the elder”) and Kanoman (“the younger”). (Currently there is a third kraton in Cirebon, known as Kacerbonan.) The original set of gamelan sekaten instruments was divided between the Kasepuhan and Kanoman palaces at the time of the split; the bonang and saron went to Kasepuhan, while the gongs went to Kanoman. Each kraton completed its set with newly forged instruments (North 2002).

Gamelan sekaten is associated with a festival called Garebeg Maulud or Sekaten, which honors the anniversary of the birth of the prophet Muhammad. Sekaten takes place during Muslim “holy week,” which is the 6th to the 12th of the third Javanese month Maulud (equivalent to the Islamic month Rabi ul Awal) (Sumarsam 1980:54; Sutton 1999: 644). In Cirebon, the sekaten festival involves a ceremony called *panjang jimat*, in which all the palace heirlooms (including the gamelan instruments) are brought out of their storeroom in the kraton and washed. The water is coveted for its magical properties (Dapperen 1933:156; Vetter 2001:79; North 2002).

The Kanoman palace’s gamelan sekaten is played for this festival, which draws a large crowd (Falla 1985:38; North 2002). The Kasepuhan gamelan sekaten is played for different, but also Islamic, occasions: to celebrate the Islamic holy days Idul-Fitri and Idul’adha (North 1982;

Suanda 1999:687; North 2002). In contrast to the large crowd that the Kanoman palace draws for the prophet's birthday, the Kasepuhan occasion is for the palace residents and guests only (North 2002).

The significance of the gamelan sekaten instruments and pieces lies mostly in their status as symbols of history, royal legitimacy, and continuity with the past. When people play and hear them, they are more concerned with the fact that the instruments have a distinguished history, still exist, and are being played than they are with specifically aesthetic qualities of the sounds. This does not mean that the sounds are not important—they are a potent symbol of all the history, power, and significance that stand behind the instruments. It means, rather, that the sounds are judged by standards that are different than those to which most Westerners are accustomed. Nobody composes new pieces for these ensembles because the meaning of music lies not in novelty or freshness, but rather in the venerability of the prescribed repertoire and the ceremonial act of playing them yet once again.

For similar reasons, no efforts are made to keep the instruments perfectly tuned; although intonation adjustments might enhance the music's aesthetic value, it might also diminish its symbolic potency and detract from its venerability. Furthermore, the scraping and filing and pounding that tuning bronze gamelan instruments involves might damage or break the old bronze keys and pots. Only when the instruments are in danger of total disintegration do the musicians cease playing them; the original heirloom gongs from the kraton Kanoman have been unplayable for some time, and replacement gongs are played for performances. The original gongs are still revered as heirlooms, however, and are maintained very carefully, wrapped in white cloth and cleaned every year, to slow down any further deterioration (see Figure 2.10) (Dapperen 1933; Soepandi 1976:26).

Gamelan sekaten provide a palpable link with the past, and contribute to the prestige and authority of Cirebonese royalty even in modern democratic Indonesia. The sound of the gamelan is an integral part of the celebration soundscape—an essential sonic backdrop for proper observance of the festival. People can experience the past through the sight and sound of these heirloom ensembles, which are believed to have arrived in the present unchanged. These ceremonial ensembles provide their Javanese listeners a sonic channel to history; they provide outsiders a glimmer of understanding of gamelan music's symbolic power (cf. Vetter 2001:67).



*Figure 2.10. Kraton Kanoman's sekaten gongs, wrapped in white cloth (courtesy Michael Ewing)*

### *Music in Cirebon Today*

The gamelan sekaten ensembles of Cirebon are more significant as relics than as instruments of a dynamic music culture; some of their meaning lies in the perception that they have not changed for centuries. But gamelan ensembles play an important role in modern Cirebonese music as well. Modern gamelan music still retains a symbolic component—the people of Cirebon believe that the traditional arts are the legacy of the nine saints, and most artists claim to be descended from the Islamic saints Pangeran Panggung and Sunan Kali Jaga (Suanda 1999:687)—but people tend to judge the sounds of most music not by how “traditional” it is, but by how well it serves their artistic needs and satisfies their aesthetic desires.

#### *Village Gamelan*

Although gamelan are a symbol of aristocracy and power, they also provide music for village ceremonies and entertainment. In fact, many of the artists who perform for the palaces live in the tiny agricultural villages that surround the city of Cirebon. Village musicians may not be able to afford instruments made out of valuable bronze; a more economical substitute is iron.

Historically, villages around Cirebon maintain their cohesiveness partly through the shared celebration of important events in the lives of individual marriages (“life-cycle” events such as marriage, circumcision, etc.) as well as through annual celebrations. Because the lives of most villagers are centered around the growing of rice, the annual ceremonies emphasize the agricultural cycle. Cirebonese villages typically celebrate five annual festivals: *sidekah bumi* (blessing of the earth, before the farmers begin to work in the fields); *ngunjung* (giving thanks to Allah and to ancestral spirits); *kasinoman* (a ritual for youth); *mapag tambra* (after planting and weeding), and *mapag Sri* (welcoming the rice goddess as the crop matures) (Suanda 1999:688).

Villagers see no contradiction in having a good time at these celebrations despite their deep and serious meanings; small children get to indulge themselves with special treats for the eyes, ears, and mouths, young people turn their attention to meeting and wooing potential boy- and girlfriends, and adults enjoy a break from their usual routines. The atmosphere during such celebrations is always *ramé*, which means crowded, full of bustle, with lots of eye-catching sights and ear-catching sounds bombarding the crowds from all sides. The performing arts make an inestimable contribution to this lively atmosphere.

Modern Cirebonese gamelan include instruments similar to those of the archaic ensembles as well as additional instruments. Typical village gamelan ensembles include saron of various sizes, two-row bonang and other horizontal gong chimes, and hanging gongs in three basic sizes. Like modern gamelan ensembles from other parts of Java, they include non-bronze instruments as well, including *gambang* (a wooden xylophone) and *kendang* (two-headed barrel-shaped drums). Cirebonese gamelan also features a bamboo flute (*suling*) and singers.

### *Topeng*

Dancing with masks to the accompaniment of gamelan music is an especially time-honored custom in north-coast communities in Java. Masked dance performances called *topeng* continue to be characteristic of Cirebonese village celebrations in the twenty-first century. Topeng performances combine music, theater, and dance into a day-long performance which combines philosophy, entertainment, political comment and satire, and sometimes even magic into one multimedia package.


In the village style around Cirebon, topeng is primarily a solo dance form. The main dancer, called the *dalang topeng*, directs a troupe of musicians and dancers and performs most of the solo dances him- or

herself. Dalang topeng (like many other artists in Cirebon) usually come from artistic families and learned the art and craft of topeng from their mother or father. While dalang topeng take great pains to preserve and perpetuate some elements of their family's heritage, they also introduce changes and innovations which they believe will enhance their performances without sullyng their tradition. Each family has developed a unique style, and dalang topeng compete with one another for invitations to perform. The characteristics discussed below represent a shared body of custom, but it is difficult to say much with any final certainty about such a dynamic performing tradition.

Topeng performances center around the presentation of four (sometimes five) solo dances; each dance features a different character and a different mask (see Figure 2.11). The masks alone suggest characters with contrasting personality traits and tendencies. The characters have names drawn from a variety of epic stories known throughout Java, and at times the topeng performance is narrative, but for the most part the characters represent abstract character types which emphasize personality traits that audience members can recognize in themselves. By experiencing the dances, people come to know something about each character trait as well as something about themselves. A topeng performance typically lasts about 8 or 9 hours, from 8 AM until 5 PM. The four or five main dances are interspersed with a variety of other performances, including *bodoran* (standup and physical comedy by the troupe's clowns) and sometimes even *tayuban* (men's social dance), as well as speeches and breaks for prayers.

A dalang topeng brings the characters of the masks to life by adding appropriate movement and music. The dalang topeng "improvises" the dance—improvises in the sense that the exact form the dance takes is not known until the performance is under way, but not in the sense that the dancer does whatever he or she feels like doing. Each dalang topeng has perfected a large repertory of dance movements, along with the knowledge of how to fit them to the musical accompaniment in limitless combinations. The musicians know the basic framework for each dance, as well as the musical pieces that go with each section of the dance. The dalang and the musicians share a sophisticated set of signals and conventions that allow them to put together a long, complex dance piece on the spot.

This approach to performance—the spontaneous realization and elaboration of relatively simple frameworks through the application of conventional formulas—is common throughout Java and Bali and ap-

	Name	Mask Color	Facial Features	Character
	Rahwana	red	bulging eyes, large moustache, protruding gold teeth	Greedy, lusty king
	Tumenggung/ Patih	purple/ brown	round eyes, manicured moustache	Aggressive Prime Minister
	Rumyang	pink	thin, downcast eyes, laughing mouth	Mature sweetness
	Samba/ Pamindo	white/ cream	thin, downcast eyes, laughing mouth	Adolescent exuberance
	Panji	white	thin, downcast eyes, delicate mouth	Extremely refined and centered

*Figure 2.11. Five topeng masks, their features, and their characterizations (Henry Spiller)*

plies to music, dance, and other arts as well. In effect, performers store pieces in their memories in a compressed form, along with information about how to decompress them during performance. This process partly explains how Indonesian artists can perform richly textured and



Figure 2.12.  
*Dalang topeng*  
 Sujana Arja dances  
 “Rahwana”  
 (Henry Spiller)

nuanced music and dance for hours without consulting musical notation or overloading their memories.

An example drawn from the Cirebonese village topeng repertory will illustrate one aspect of this compression/decompression process. “Rahwana” is typically the final dance of the performance. The mask associated with this dance is red, with bulging eyes and a thick moustache. The color and features suggest a coarse, rude individual. The dance movements—fast, full of wild energy and sharp contrasts—reinforce these traits (see Figure 2.12).

The outline of the “Rahwana” dance, like the other topeng dances, involves four main sections, which are named after their basic tempos: (1) *dodoan* (slow), (2) *tengahan* (medium slow), (3) *kering* (medium fast) and (4) *deder* (fast). Each section is associated with a special piece of music, with a specific colotomic form (i.e., a specific pattern of instrumental sounds that act as a foundation for the other instruments’ parts). For each section, the dancer knows a variety of possible movement units called *jogedan*, which she can repeat a variable number of times, as well as a variety of transitional movements, called *alihan*, which provide a bridge between two movement units. Within each sec-



tion, the dancer can present some or all of the movement units in whatever sequence seems appropriate at the moment. Each movement unit fits in with the musical accompaniment in a prescribed manner; however, so the dancer must take care to be synchronized with the music. Furthermore, the transitions can occur only at particular points within the musical pieces (Suanda 1988).

To further connect the dancer with the accompanying music, the ensemble's drummer plays the drum pattern that, by convention, matches the specific movement units the dancer performs at any given moment. These drum patterns often provide an aural analog to the dance movement as well—by matching a strong step with a solid, low-pitched drum stroke, for example, or by accompanying a slow, sustained movement with a tremolo.

The four musical functions that different gamelan sekaten instruments perform are also evident in the gamelan ensemble that accompanies topeng. One way to understand the musical and choreographic structure of the pieces that accompany the different sections of “Rahwana” is to consider their colotomic forms—the foundation part that is outlined by the large hanging gong and other time-keeping instruments.

In a gamelan topeng, the main time-keeping instruments include gong (large hanging gong), kempul (smaller, higher-pitched hanging gong), kebluk (still smaller gong laid horizontally on a frame), kenong (gong chime with five to seven high-pitched horizontally laid gongs), and jengglong (similar to kenong except lower in pitch). Once again, the second syllable of each instrument name suggests the way it sounds.

Figure 2.13 shows the foundation parts played by the time-keeping instruments for the kering (medium-fast) section (a piece called “Sarung Ilang”); Figure 2.14 shows the parts played for the deder (fast) section (a piece called “Gonjing”; both these pieces can be heard on Track 2 of the CD that accompanies this book). The part for each of the time-keeping instruments is provided separately; the line labelled “composite” shows how the various parts fit together to create a single musical line consisting of a rapid alternation of different instrumental timbres. One can sing a reasonable approximation of the composite colotomic form by reciting the composite line with the appropriate syllable from an instrument's name in rhythm (that is, “bluk” for B, “pul” for P, and “gong” for G).

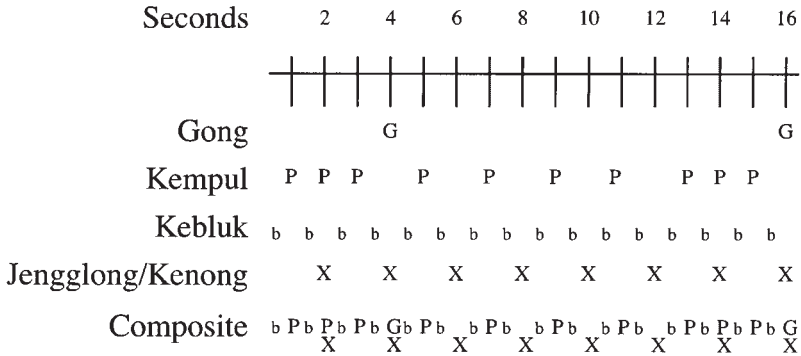


Figure 2.13. Colotomic parts for the kering section of "Rahwana"  
(the accompanying piece is called "Sarung Ilang")

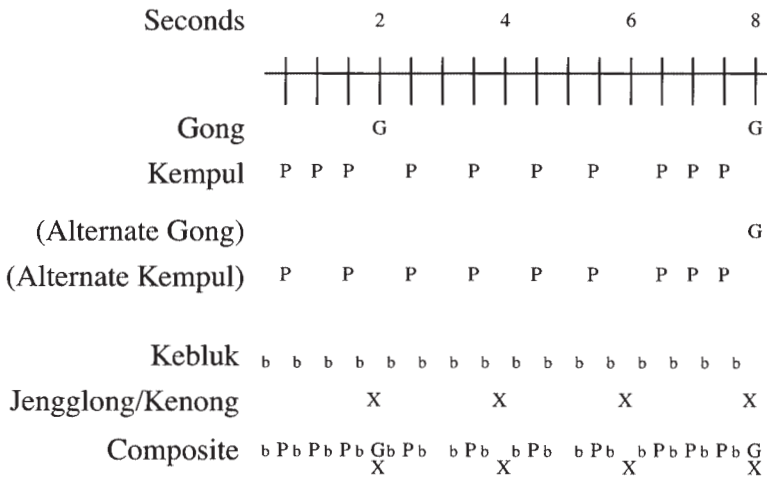


Figure 2.14. Colotomic parts for the dedar section of "Rahwana"  
(the accompanying piece is called "Gonjing")

The colotomic forms of the two pieces are almost exactly the same; the main difference is tempo (the dedar piece, "Gonjing," is twice as fast as the kering piece, "Sarung Ilang") and the number of kenong/jengglong strokes (approximately one per two seconds in both pieces, which translates to eight strokes for "Sarung Ilang" and four strokes for

“Gonjing”). In some topeng troupes, the gong player omits one of the gong strokes from the “Gonjing” cycle.

The dancer, however, does not simply dance twice as fast (which would probably be impossible anyway—even the best dancers can step and jump only so fast). Rather, a movement unit in the faster *deder* section takes up the same amount of elapsed time as a movement unit in the *kering* section—say, for example, four seconds. That means that the dancer can fit only two repetitions of a four-second movement into one musical cycle in *deder*, whereas four repetitions could fit into one *kering* cycle. Four full repetitions might be tedious, however, so the dancer might add more transitional movements to break things up; a common strategy is to insert a special dance and drum pattern just before the gong stroke. For similar reasons, the dancer must initiate the transitional movements at a different point in the cycle of the *deder* than in the *kering* to wind up doing the correct thing at the appropriate time; in this case, the drum and dance pattern actually straddles a gong stroke (see Figure 2.15).

Rather than memorizing these possible sequences by rote, however, the *dalang* topeng thinks only about doing the particular *jogedan* and about the characteristics of the accompanying pieces. The details of exactly how many times to repeat the *jogedan* and when to insert the *alih* movements emerge in the process of performance. Because the transition movements are typically tied to gong strokes in the accompanying piece, opportunities to change *jogedan* come more frequently in the later, faster sections of a dance than in the earlier sections, adding to their excitement.

This brief overview of the process of a topeng performance does not begin to do justice to the complex and subtle artistry such performances involve. It does, however, introduce some basic tenets that underlie Javanese performing arts. In essence, there are two elements at work: (1) the abstract, conceptualized outline or framework of a piece, and (2) the knowledge of how to flesh out the framework in real time. In the case of Cirebonese topeng, the abstract outline of a topeng performance involves a sequence of four (or five) dances; each dance has four sections; each section has a particular musical piece and a generalized sequence of *jogedan*. To perform the dance, the *dalang* topeng relies on her knowledge of how to repeat, connect, and vary her repertory of *jogedan* within the constraints created by the hierarchy of frameworks.

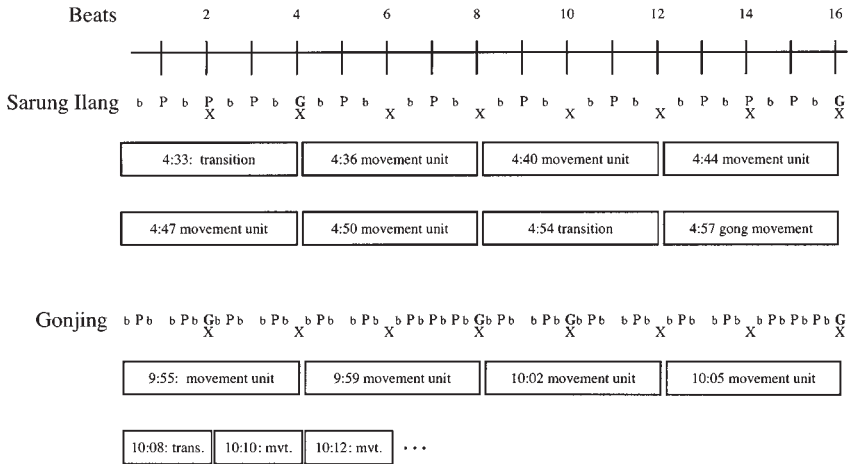


Figure 2.15. Comparison of kering and deder choreography (timings refer to appropriate moments of Track 2 of the CD that accompanies this book)

In a sense, this approach to performance models the way in which individuals perceive the structure of the universe and their place within it. Anthropologists Gregory Bateson and Clifford Geertz have suggested that Javanese and Balinese people conceive the universe as a “steady state”—a fixed structure through which individuals move on fixed axes. In this conception, the day-to-day events of people’s lives are generated by underlying patterns that do not change. This conception does not negate the individuality of a person’s experience, or suggest that a person’s actions do not affect his or her fate. It does mean, however, that the uniqueness of each individual’s experience is thrust into the background, while its sameness is brought to the foreground (Bateson 1963; Geertz 1973). Geertz explains:

It is not . . . their existence as persons—their immediacy and individuality, or their special, never-to-be-repeated, impact upon the stream of historical events—which are culturally played up, symbolically emphasized: it is their social placement, their particular location within a persisting, indeed an eternal, metaphysical order (Geertz 1973:390).

By finding an individual path in real time through a fixed performance structure—by bringing a sense of “now” to a performance

through the deployment of a mastery of the infinite possibilities that the structure of topeng dance enables—a dalang topeng demonstrates the relationship between the individual and the cosmos. By portraying several archetypal characters, the dalang topeng suggests that a variety of paths can be negotiated through the cosmos, depending on one's predispositions. By watching, learning, and appreciating the aesthetic outcome of the dalang topeng's journey through the performance, the audience members absorb not only the different character templates available to them, but come to understand the relationship of the individual to the cosmos as well.

Because of their mastery of the relationship between the world of humans and the cosmos, as demonstrated through the performance of topeng, dalang topeng are regarded as individuals who can intervene on behalf of humans in spiritual and supernatural matters. One of the things the sponsor of a topeng event considers when choosing a dalang topeng is how much spiritual power the dalang can bring to bear on the occasion. Mothers might interrupt a dalang topeng's dance to implore him to bless their newborn infants, or even to ask for inspiration in naming the child. Dalang who have demonstrated great supernatural abilities can demand higher fees.

For their part, dalang topeng take their status as intermediaries between the cosmos and the everyday world quite seriously. Their goal is not simply to dance beautifully; the fates and futures of babies, individuals, and even entire communities depend on their skillful and artistic dancing. On a performance tour of the United States, one dalang topeng, about to step on the stage to dance in front of thousands of New Yorkers at Lincoln Center, was asked if he was nervous. He responded that he was not—because there was nothing “important” about the particular performance—nobody's life or future was at stake.

### Central Java

For a variety of reasons, gamelan music in Cirebon appears to have changed more slowly and less dramatically than it has in other parts of Java and Bali (Wright 1978:16; Suanda 1999:686). Some scholars look to Cirebon for insight into gamelan music of the Hindu, Buddhist, and early Islamic kingdoms of medieval Java. The gamelan music of Central Java, on the other hand, has clearly undergone significant transfor-

mations over the past several centuries, and sounds quite different from Cirebonese gamelan music.

The four Central Javanese kraton are similar to the kraton in Cirebon in many ways. The Central Javanese rulers trace their ancestry to the powerful Islamic kingdom of Mataram, which arose in the sixteenth century; the influential leader Sultan Agung consolidated power and territory, vanquished the remaining Hindu-Buddhist kingdom in Java (that is, Pajajaran) and even dominated the powerful north-coast Islamic states. Like the royal families of Cirebon, the rulers of these four princedoms own gamelan instruments that establish their legitimacy as heirs to earlier empires, including sekaten ensembles as well as other ceremonial gamelan with rich histories.

Over the years the original Mataram kingdom was split several times in response to rebellions and conflicts over succession. Dutch colonial powers wielded significant influence in the creation of some of the kraton; one of their goals was to constrain the power and influence of Central Javanese rulers by establishing rival rulers in close proximity to one another. By the nineteenth century there were two major kraton, one in the city of Surakarta (also known as Solo), and the other in the city of Yogyakarta. The ruler of the Kraton Solo holds the title of Susuhunan, while the Kraton Yogyakarta's ruler holds the title Sultan. There is a minor kraton in each of the two cities as well: the Mangkunegaran in Surakarta and the Paku Alaman in Yogyakarta.

Unlike the Cirebon rulers, however, the rulers of each of the four Central Javanese kraton had significant financial resources at hand, as well as a keen desire to upstage the other three kraton and flaunt their prestige. Because of the Dutch control of the political situation, there were only limited opportunities for competition; during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a primary arena for this competition was development and patronage of the arts.

The American painter and dancer Hubert Stowitts, who spent about a year living, studying, and painting in the various Central Javanese kraton in 1927–1928, provides a vivid account of the courts' rivalry at that time in his unpublished book on Javanese dance and theater (Stowitts n.d.). The palaces were, he wrote, "hot houses of Oriental intrigue and mystery" (Stowitts n.d.:vi–11). According to Stowitts, the Sultan, Susuhunan, and minor court princes wore Dutch uniforms when they visited one another to circumvent the demands of Javanese etiquette that would force them to acknowledge each other's rank and

status. The rulers mounted lavish musical and theatrical productions to celebrate important occasions, vied with one another to see who could produce the most elaborate spectacles, and trained their heirs to be patrons of the arts.

We have already seen how the possession of gamelan instruments is a symbol of legitimacy and power. It is not too difficult to imagine how cultivating and refining the music played on these gamelan instruments might enhance the power and status that the instruments already conveyed. For one thing, gamelan music aestheticizes the structure of the universe; the predictable colotomic forms order time into cycles that mirror the progress of time and space. In addition, the performance of gamelan music, as we have seen, models the relationship of individuals to the cosmos.

Furthermore, the stratified musical texture of gamelan music mimics the organization of Javanese kingdoms in sonic form. The adjective “stratified” also describes a social structure; a “stratified” society is one that divides its population into different classes, each with different roles, duties, and privileges. In stratified societies, classes do not mix very often, but social order depends on each class fulfilling its designated role and maintaining the status quo. By regarding the exaggerated musical stratification in gamelan music as beautiful, listeners are predisposed to accept social stratification as the natural order of things. Finally, gamelan music provides a means for displaying wealth and prestige (by having music playing) while further reinforcing a stratified social structure by limiting access to that prestige (only those with specialized knowledge and etiquette can fully appreciate the subtleties of the music).

The ancient ceremonial gamelan of the Central Javanese courts, like Cirebonese gamelan sekaten, include only bronze percussion instruments (with the exception of the large drum called *bedug*). Such ensembles, and the music played on them, sufficiently represent medieval Javanese ideas of cosmic order and stratified society. In their quest for prestige and political influence in a rapidly changing world, however, Javanese royalty and the musicians they patronized found ways to reconcile more modern musical approaches with the older ideas. In doing so, they modelled a justification for their own continued existence.

A modern Central Javanese court-style gamelan ensemble (see Figure 2.16) is really two different ensembles combined into one. It includes a full complement of the bronze percussion instruments similar



Figure 2.16. *Gamelan ensemble in the pendopo (pavilion) of the Kraton Surakarta (Henry Spiller)*

to those found in gamelan sekaten—large hanging gongs, gong chimes and keyed metallophones of various sizes, and drums. In the modern Central Javanese style, these “loud-sounding” instruments are complemented by a “soft-sounding” ensemble that consists of male and female singers, a bowed stringed instrument called *rebab*, a bamboo flute called *suling*, a wooden xylophone called *gambang*, and a keyed metallophone called *gender*. At times, the loud-sounding instruments play alone; at other times, only the soft instruments play. Sometimes the entire forces—loud and soft instruments, as well as singers—all play together.

The soft-sounding chamber ensemble represents a different approach to musical structure than the loud bronze ensemble. These soft instruments’ indistinct attacks, coupled with their penchant for blurring one note into the next, make them less suitable for marking off time in the way that bronze gamelan instruments do; at the same time, these instruments are capable of producing subtle nuances of melodic ornamentation that are unavailable on bronze instruments. While the bronze instruments and the colotomic forms they outline evoke the cyclic qualities of time and the cosmos and emphasize the repetitive nature of events, the soft instruments—especially the voices, with their capacity for language and stories—evoke instead the linear qualities of time in which each moment is unique and never to be experienced again.



In performance, the “linear” soft-sounding ensemble is made to conform to the cyclic framework outlined by the bronze instruments. The combination of the bronze and chamber ensembles can be interpreted as a metaphor of the juxtaposition of old Javanese ideas about cosmic order and kingship with newer political approaches introduced by Islam and Europeans. In modern Javanese gamelan music the new musical approach is layered on top of the old approach, but is subordinate to it, and thus perpetuates the prestige and status of the old approach. In a subtle way, then, this updated gamelan music models Javanese royalty’s hopes for a new political reality, in which any new approaches to government and authority are firmly grounded in and subordinate to the more old-fashioned concepts of Javanese kingship.

Throughout the nineteenth century and into the twentieth, Javanese aristocrats cultivated this new approach to gamelan music. Each of the kraton maintained its own staff of trained and dedicated musicians and other artists, who developed increasingly sophisticated approaches to music, theater, and dance. There was much cross-fertilization between the four kraton as well; princes and princesses from kraton families married one another and often took instruments and musicians to their new homes as part of their dowries and retinues. Over the past two centuries, a highly sophisticated, modern style of Central Javanese court gamelan has emerged; although there are subtle differences between the various palaces, there is much in common as well.

Musicians outside the courts emulated these palace styles as best they could. Beginning in the 1920s, some kraton aristocrats decided to share training in the arts with Javanese outside the palace and opened schools for outsiders. These were attended not only by Javanese commoners, but by an occasional foreign student as well. Following Indonesian independence, these court styles became part of a national, as well as a specifically Javanese, heritage; government-sponsored performing arts academies have become centers for innovations and training in the performing arts as well since their establishment beginning in the 1970s.

Central Javanese gamelan music involves both of the two Javanese tuning systems: *slendro* (a five-pitch equidistant tuning system) and *pelog* (a seven-pitch non-equidistant system). Often a set of gamelan instruments includes a pair (or several pairs) of each instrument—one member of each pair tuned to *slendro*, the other to *pelog*. A single mu-

sician is assigned to both instruments; when the piece is cast in pelog, he plays the pelog instrument, and when the piece is in slendro, he plays the slendro instrument.

Like Cirebonese sekaten and topeng gamelan music, Central Javanese gamelan music has four different “functional” layers: (1) colotomic; (2) simplified/abstracted melody, (3) elaborated/varied melody, and (4) drum patterns.

### *Colotomic Parts*

Once again, the foundation layer is provided by the interlocking pattern created by several gongs and gong chimes of various sizes and timbres. The most important of these instruments is the *gong ageng*, an extremely large hanging gong. The sound of a good quality gong ageng is awe-inspiring; these large and heavy instruments produce a pitch so low that it is as much felt as it is heard; furthermore, they are constructed and tuned so that the pitch and volume oscillate (Javanese refer to this quality as *ombak*—ocean waves). The overall effect is quite visceral; it is little wonder that the Javanese often consider a good gong to be a repository of spiritual power, and even give them proper names and royal titles.

Strokes of the large gong mark the endpoints of the main cycles of Central Javanese gamelan music. The sound of a large gong takes quite a long time to die away, and its sound is never damped. For shorter cycles, a smaller type of gong is often played instead of the large gong to mark the ends of cycles; this smaller gong is called a *gong suwukan* (or sometimes *gong siyem*). While its pitch is still rather low, it is not as low and visceral as that of a gong ageng, and its pitch is often more distinct. For this reason, a set of gamelan instruments may include several of these smaller gong suwukan with various pitches; a gamelan rarely includes more than one or two large gongs, however.

A second part of the foundation layer is played on a gong chime called *kenong*. Each kenong pot is a large gong with a very deep lip laid horizontally over ropes in a stand. Although the pots are large, their pitch is very high because of their shape and density, and their sound rings for some time. The second syllable of the instrument’s name (“nong”) is an onomatopoeic representation of its sound. Kenong typically includes a pot tuned to each pitch of the tuning system—that is,

five for slendro, seven for pelog—although it is possible to get by with as few as one kenong.

Ketuk provides a third instrumental sound in the foundation layer of Central Javanese gamelan music. As the second syllable of its name (“tuk”) suggests, its sound is not as high-pitched as kenong, and does not ring for a long time. A kenong player hits the kenong with the mallet and immediately removes the mallet so that the instrument can ring; a ketuk player, on the other hand, lets the mallet return to the boss after it is hit so that the sound rings only for a short time and is then damped. Often the musician lets the mallet bounce on the ketuk, resulting in a sort of dribbling sound. Central Javanese colotomic forms also might include the sound of a *kempyang* (a small, high-pitched ketuk-like gong, or sometimes a pair of such little gongs) and *kempul* (one or more hanging gongs, smaller than gong suwukan, that form a gong chime). Figure 2.3 shows one large gong ageng (front right), a smaller gong suwukan (rear right), and two kempul (left).

### *Central Javanese Forms*

While there are many Central Javanese gamelan pieces, they all make use of a fairly small number of patterns of interlocking gong, kenong, ketuk, and other colotomic instruments. Just as construction workers, when building a concrete structure, start with a wooden form into which they pour cement and rocks, composers of gamelan music begin with a colotomic template or mold into which they “pour” the melody and elaboration. In English, a musical template of this kind is typically called a *form*; college music students learn about the classical sonata form, and almost everybody is familiar with the verse-chorus-verse-chorus form of most popular songs. Central Javanese musicians regard each of the standard colotomic patterns that undergird gamelan pieces as a form. Each form has a name and is defined by its distinct interlocking pattern of gong, kenong, ketuk, kempyang, and kempul strokes.

For example, the form called *ladrang* serves as the foundation for many Central Javanese pieces. It is usually described as a phrase that is thirty-two beats long, with a stroke of the large gong marking the last beat. Figure 2.17 provides a representation of the *ladrang* form’s colotomic parts. The timeline across the top of the figure marks off each of the phrase’s thirty-two beats; the single large gong stroke is notated with a “G” in the figure. The other colotomic instruments divide this phrase into increasingly smaller segments. Kenong strokes (indicated with “N” in the figure) divide the thirty-two-beat phrase into four equal

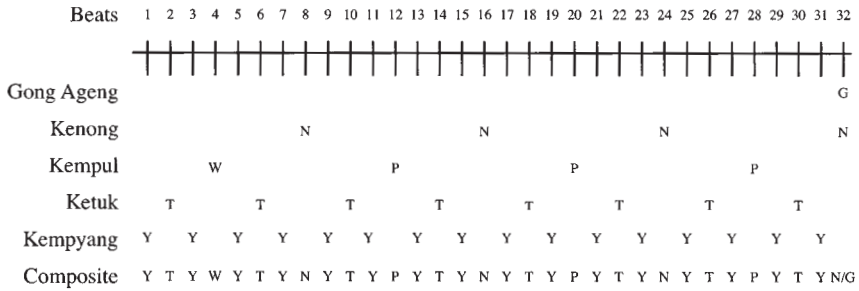


Figure 2.17. Colotomic patterns for the Central Javanese form *ladrang*

phrases of eight beats each. Kempul strokes (“P”) divide each of the resulting eight-beat kenong phrases in half; the kempul stroke in the first kenong phrase, however, is usually omitted (its absence is called *wela*—“W” in the figure). Note that there are eight beats between each kempul stroke. Ketuk strokes (“T”) fall between kenong and kempul strokes (every four beats), and kempyang strokes fall on the remaining beats (every two beats).

Each part is absolutely regular—a gong stroke every thirty-two beats, a kenong stroke every eight beats, a kempul stroke (or a *wela*) every eight beats, a ketuk stroke every four beats, and a kempyang stroke every two beats. A musician could conceivably play his part simply by keeping track of his own pattern—by counting to thirty-two, or eight, or four, or two, depending on his instrument.

It is not just the number of beats in each instrument’s phrase that is important, however, but the relationship of each part to the others. Each instrument’s regular pattern is offset from the other instrument parts so that the composite pattern formed by all five instruments includes some sort of sound on every beat. The musicians and the listeners hear each beat marked by the sound of one of the instruments; they also hear the sound patterns that emerge as the various instrument timbres interlock; these sound patterns group the beats into larger units of time.

When marked with the varying instrumental timbres of a colotomic form, each moment begins to take on more significance. What started out as a simple pulse—a sequence of undifferentiated beats, each of which is exactly the same as the previous one and the next one—becomes a hierarchy of moments, each of which is palpably more or less accented than the moments that precede and follow it. The hierarchy of sounds transforms the beats into a hierarchy of moments in time

that seem to lead inevitably and predictably to the most significant beat (and sound) of all—the beat marked by the visceral sound of the large gong. And then it starts all over again. A key characteristic of Central Javanese forms (and of most gamelan music) is cyclicity. The sound of the large gong marks not only the end of one phrase, but the beginning of the next phrase as well. Gamelan pieces typically begin *and* end with a stroke of the large gong.

Ladrang is only one of several forms that underlie Central Javanese gamelan pieces. Most of the other forms (such as *lancaran*, *ketawang*, and *gendhing*) exhibit the same general characteristics, such as a hierarchy of beats and recurring patterns of sounds, but the details—the number of beats in a phrase, which colotomic instruments are included, the relationship between the various instrumental timbres—are different.

The term *gendhing* has two senses in Central Javanese music; in its most general sense, it refers to any gamelan piece with a cyclical foundation—in other words, it means something similar to the English word “piece.” Its more specific meaning refers to large-scale forms with 64, 128, or 256 beats in each phrase marked by a gong stroke. *Gendhing* have two distinct sections (*merong* and *inggah*), each with its own colotomic form. Sometimes the *inggah* section of a *gendhing* is a piece in *ladrang* form.

Not all Central Javanese gamelan pieces are cast in these regular forms. One important class of such pieces are called *pathetan* or *sulukan*. These pieces have no regular beat, and typically set a mood. *Pathetan* are instrumental versions of these pieces, which a few of the musicians might perform before or after the performance of a *gendhing*. *Sulukan* are the same pieces supplemented with a vocal part that typically is sung by a *dhalang* (puppetmaster) to set a mood or a scene in a theatrical performance. Another set of pieces has regular meter, but their colotomic forms are less symmetrical. These pieces, called *ayak-ayakan*, *sprepegan*, and *sampak*, can be started and stopped on a moment’s notice and are quite useful for accompanying action scenes in dramatic performances.

### *Abstracted Melody Layer*

A large body of Javanese pieces has in common the colotomic forms described above. What distinguishes one piece in *ladrang* form from

all the others is its melodic character. Some Javanese musicians assert that each gamelan piece has its own essential melody that musicians conceptualize, but which is not explicitly played on any of the instruments; rather, this abstract “inner melody,” coupled with the musicians’ understanding of the idioms of each instrument, guides their choices about exactly what to play. The parts that emerge from this process are derived from the inner melody, but are not the inner melody itself (Sumarsam 1975). Thus, all of the different parts that gamelan musicians play are different manifestations—simultaneous variations—of a single essential melodic outline. Many of the musical traditions examined in Chapter One, notably Toba Batak gondang music, exhibit a similarly abstract approach to melody and variation.

Other Javanese musicians, however, point to one particular part, played by several instruments together, as the basic melodic outline for a piece. This part is called *balungan* or *balunganing gendhing*, which means literally the “skeleton” of the piece. From this point of view, the other instruments play parts that elaborate upon this basic melodic outline.

### *Balungan*

The *balungan* part is played on several different instruments. *Saron* is a generic term for a keyed instrument with six or seven keys that covers one octave of either the slendro or pelog tuning system. The *saron* family of instruments in Central Java includes several sizes, each with a different range. The keys of the large *saron demung* are tuned one octave lower than the corresponding keys of the medium-sized *saron barung*, which are, in turn, one octave lower than those of the small *saron panerus* (also known as *peking*). Many gamelan include two or four instruments of each size. While each instrumentalist has only one octave’s worth of pitches at his or her disposal, taken as a group the three *saron* sizes cover three full octaves (see Figure 2.18; in the figure, the seven pitches of the pelog tuning system are numbered 1 to 7 from low to high. A dot below the number indicates that the pitch is in the low octave; a dot above the number indicates that the pitch is in the high octave; no dot indicates a pitch in the medium octave).

The players of the large and medium-sized *saron* instruments often perform the *balungan* part together—each plays exactly the same keys on his or her particular instrument; the result is, of course, that the *balungan* part is sounded in octaves, because a key on the large *saron* is an octave lower than the corresponding key on the medium-sized

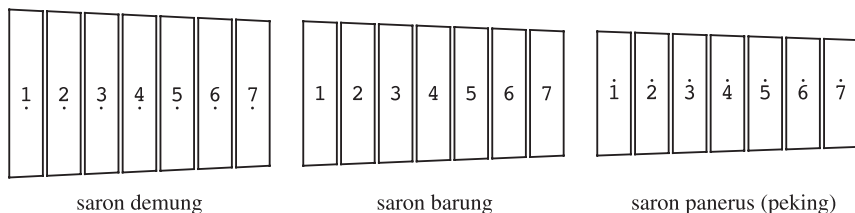


Figure 2.18. Comparison of three sizes of saron

saron. If the essential melody goes beyond the range of an instrument—for example, if it ascends from a 6 up to a 1—the saron demung player simply replaces the pitch that he does not have (in this case, the 1 in the medium range) with a pitch in a different octave that he does have (in this case, 1 an octave below; see Figure 2.19). The saron barung player has the essential melody’s 1, but not its low 6; he uses the 6 an octave higher in place of the 6. Although the contour of the essential melody is ascending in pitch (from 6 to 1), each of the instrumentalists plays a descending melody (6 down to 1 or 6 down to 1) instead. Because the parts are doubled at the octave, however, listeners can hear the “correct” melodic contour emerging from the combination of the two parts—in this case, the saron demung’s 6 followed by the saron barung’s 1 (see the circled “essential” melody in Figure 2.19).

It is tempting to think of the balungan of a piece as the essential melody itself. When Javanese gamelan music is notated, it is typically the balungan (along with indications about when to play the colotomic instruments) that gets written down. Many musicians, especially those trained in the government conservatories, can extemporize parts for all the other instruments given the balungan part. It is clear from the above discussion, however, that the balungan parts do not do complete justice to a very significant aspect of a piece’s essential melody—namely, its overall contour (when it goes high and when it goes low).

With regard to rhythm, the balungan part is typically quite regular; that is, there is a single note for each beat of the colotomic cycle. Some musicians and theorists group these notes into four-note groupings, called *gatra* (*gatra* is a Javanese word which means something like “basic form or outline” [Sumarsam 1995:229]). The rhythmic accent of a four-note grouping falls on the fourth and final note. In other words, a Javanese musician would count the beats of a four-note grouping as 1-2-3-4, with the emphasis on count 4. This represents a significant contrast with most Western musicians, who would place the emphasis

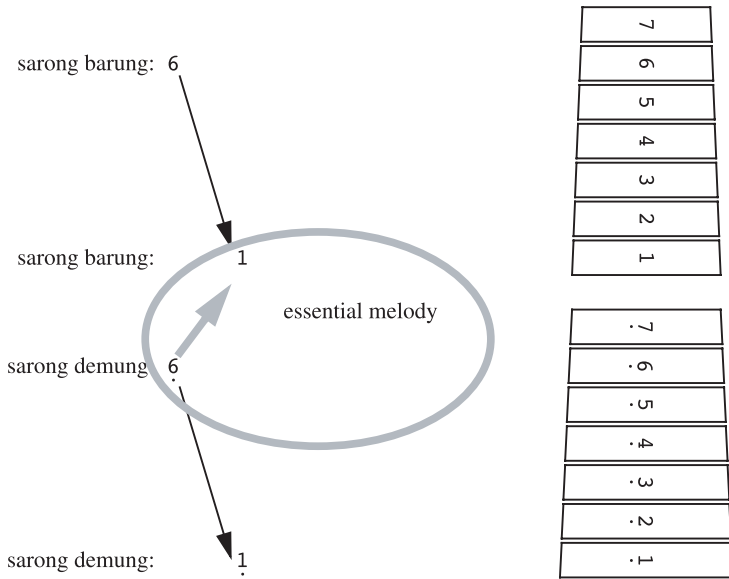


Figure 2.19. Composite of two descending balungan parts resulting in ascending essential melody

on count 1 (1-2-3-4). The “end accent” is further emphasized by the sounding on the four-note grouping’s fourth beat of whichever colotomic marker is most significant in that grouping.

The balungan part illustrated in Figure 2.20 is that of a piece in *lad-rang* form titled “Pangkur.” In this notation, the letter abbreviations for the colotomic parts are provided on one line; the pitch numbers of the balungan are provided immediately below. Notice that each note coincides with one of the instrumental timbres of the foundation part. The melody notes are grouped into four-note groupings; because *lad-rang* is a thirty-two-beat form, there are a total of eight four-note groupings (two on each line in the figure).

Of course, the balungan instruments, with their one-octave ranges, would not play the notes exactly as notated here. The second four-note grouping of the piece, for example, has a descending melodic contour (3 2 7̣ 6̣). The player of a balungan instrument, however, would have to ascend from 2 to the (higher) 7 above it, rather than descend from 2 to a (lower) 7̣; if one heard “Pangkur” performed only on a *saron*, its melodic contour would differ significantly from the “essential” version. In the recorded excerpt of “Pangkur” on the CD that accompanies this book (Track 4), the balungan part as notated in Figure 2.20 is espe-



Y	T	Y	W	Y	T	Y	N
3	2	3	7̣	3	2	7̣	6̣
Y	T	Y	P	Y	T	Y	N
7	6	3	2	5	3	2	7̣
Y	T	Y	P	Y	T	Y	N
3	5	3	2	6	5	3	2
Y	T	Y	P	Y	T	Y	N/G
5	3	2	7̣	3	2	7̣	6̣

Figure 2.20. *Ladrang “Pangkur”*

cially easy to hear when the musicians play it fairly quickly for *kebar* style (2:46–4:33).

*Javanese Tuning Systems Revisited*

It is difficult to get the sound of a notated *balungan* melody in one’s ear without some practical acquaintance with Javanese tuning systems. This version of “Pangkur” is set in the *pelog* tuning system, which has seven pitches per octave. As we have seen, it *is* possible to internalize a crude approximation of how the *pelog* tuning system sounds by comparing it to a piano’s diatonic (“white-key”) scale or by using traditional solfège syllables—*do re mi fa sol la ti do*. One way is to match the solfège syllables with the Javanese numbers is illustrated in Figure 2.21. Remember, however, that this represents a very crude approximation. Another way is to listen to the seven-pitch *pelog* scale played in Track 3 of the CD that accompanies this book, mentally mapping the Javanese numbers illustrated in Figure 2.21 with the pitches on the CD.

The basic melody for “Pangkur” includes no 1 or 4 pitches; most *pelog* melodies do not use all seven pitches that the *pelog* tuning provides; rather, they make use of one of two five-pitch subsets of the *pelog* tuning system. Sometimes one (or both) of the extraneous two pitches emerge in a piece to provide additional melodic flavor, much in the way that the piano’s black keys provide chromatic flavor in Western music. The version of “Pangkur” notated in Figure 2.20 uses the 5-pitch subset of *pelog* consisting of 7-6-5-3-2 (singing the descending melodic line “sol-fa-mi-do-ti” would approximate this scale). The inter-

C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C
do	re	mi	fa	sol	la	ti	do
3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3

Figure 2.21. Correspondence of *pelog* with *solfège* syllables

vals between the five pitches vary from very small to very large. For example, the interval between 6-5 is very small (“fa-mi”; similar to what Western musicians might call a “half-step” or a “minor second,” about 100 cents), while the interval between 5-3, on the other hand, is quite large (“mi-do”; similar to what Western musicians might call a major third, or 400 cents).

The *slendro* tuning system, like the subset of the *pelog* tuning system described above, includes five pitches. The intervals between *slendro* pitches, however, are all about the same size—neither very small nor very large. *Slendro* is even more difficult to compare to piano keys than *pelog* because the medium-sized interval that characterizes *slendro* is equivalent to approximately two-and-a-half piano keys (about 240 cents); in other words, *slendro* pitches lie somewhere “in the cracks” between piano keys.

Some Central Javanese pieces, including “Pangkur,” can be performed using either *slendro* or *pelog*. The melodic contours stay the same, but the actual pitches change because of the differences between the tuning systems (even if the 6 is the same in *pelog* and *slendro*, the 5 will be quite different). To transpose the version of “Pangkur” notated in Figure 2.20 into *slendro*, all the 7s are changed into 1s (remember that there are no 7s in *slendro*; see Figure 2.22). Although this transformation changes significantly the melodic contour of each saron player’s part—in *pelog*, the saron part jumps all over the place to hit the 7s, while in the *slendro* version the part is relatively conjunct—the overall melodic contour that emerges when all the saron-type instruments play together is more or less the same in both tuning systems.

### *Elaborated Melody Layer*

The parts played by some elaborating instruments are quite closely related to the *balungan*. The player of the highest-pitched member of the saron family, the saron *panerus*, for example, might choose to perform a part that is the same as the *balungan* except that each note is

slendro	3	2	3	1		3	2	1	6̣
pelog	3	2	3	7̣		3	2	7̣	6̣
slendro	1̣	6	3	2		5	3	2	1
pelog	7	6	3	2		5	3	2	7̣
slendro	3	5	3	2		6	5	3	2
pelog	3	5	3	2		6	5	3	2
slendro	5	3	2	1		3	2	1	6̣
pelog	5	3	2	7̣		3	2	7̣	6̣

Figure 2.22. *Ladrang “Pangkur” in slendro*

<i>saron panerus</i>	3	3	2	2	3	3	7	7	3	3	2	2	7	7	6
<i>balungan</i>	3		2		3		7		3		2		7		6

Figure 2.23. *Saron panerus elaboration pattern for ladrang “Pangkur”*

played twice and lasts half as long as the balungan part, as illustrated for the first two four-note groupings of “Pangkur” in Figure 2.23.

Many of the instruments that play elaborated melody parts have ranges larger than a single octave (unlike the saron); players of these parts attempt to preserve the contour of the “essential” melody. The parts generally are faster and/or more varied rhythmically than the balungan part as well.

*Bonang*

Bonang is a gong chime with a two-octave range. In modern Central Javanese gamelan, a bonang consists of two rows of small gongs laid over ropes in a frame. Each of the two rows includes one octave’s worth of gongs. As was the case with saron, bonang is a generic name for a family of instruments. In most Central Javanese gamelan, there are two members of the bonang family: the lower-pitched *bonang barung* and the higher-pitched *bonang panerus*. There is some overlap in these two instruments’ ranges; the upper octave of the bonang barung is in the same range as the lower octave of the bonang panerus.

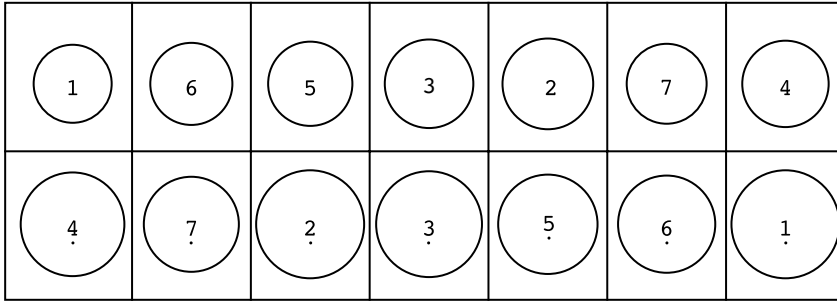


Figure 2.24. Arrangement of Central Javanese pelog bonang kettles

In contrast to the keys of a saron, which are laid out systematically from low to high (from the player's point of view), the bonang pots are not in numerical order, but rather arranged to make playing the five-pitch subsets of pelog a bit easier. Figure 2.24 depicts the arrangements of the pots from above (imagine that the player sits just below the pot labeled 3 in the figure). The pitches that are not used in the 7-6-5-3-2 subset are placed at the far ends of the instrument, so that the player need not reach too far for the pitches that will be used most frequently. The pots are not permanently attached to the frame, so the musician can rearrange them to facilitate playing another 5-pitch subset.

Like the saron panerus part described above, a possible bonang barung part involves playing twice as many notes as the balungan. Instead of simply repeating each note twice, however, the bonang idiom involves a slightly more complicated process. Instead of elaborating a single note at a time, the bonang player elaborates a pair of notes at a time. The first two notes of "Pangkur" are 3 and 2; the bonang player takes those two notes and plays the pair twice: 3-2-3-2. Figure 2.25 shows a fragment of the bonang barung part for "Pangkur."

As a general rule, the higher the pitch (and smaller the size) of an instrument, the faster its part will be. The bonang panerus, smaller and higher-pitched than the bonang barung, plays a part that is similar to

<i>bonang barung</i>	3	2	3	2	3	7	3	7	3	2	3	2	7	6	7	6
<i>balungan</i>	3		2		3		7		3		2		7		6	

Figure 2.25. Bonang barung elaboration pattern for ladrang "Pangkur"

<i>bonang panerus</i>	3̣2̣3̣.	3̣2̣3̣2̣	3̣7̣3̣.	3̣7̣3̣7̣	3̣2̣3̣.	3̣2̣3̣2̣	7̣6̣7̣.	7̣6̣7̣6̣
<i>bonang barung</i>	3 2	3 2	3 7̣	3 7̣	3 2	3 2	7̣ 6̣	7̣ 6̣
<i>balungan</i>	3	2	3	7	3	2	7	6

Figure 2.26. *Bonang panerus* elaboration pattern for ladrang “Pangkur”

the *bonang barung*’s, but which has twice as many notes. To accomplish this, the *bonang panerus* player takes each pair of notes and plays it four times, at times replacing some of the notes with rests (indicated in the notation with a dot; see Figure 2.26).

Figure 2.27 lays out all of the parts discussed above in a graphic form. In the graph, the Y-axis represents pitch and the X-axis represents time. Each instrument’s part is represented by a different shade of gray. The figure demonstrates how the saron-family instruments provide a “skeleton” of melody—the *balungan*—which the *bonang*-family parts “flesh out” by adding melodies that not only fill in the spaces suggested by the skeleton, but provide something like “connective tissue” that ties the skeleton parts together.

This graphic representation also illustrates why the word stratification describes the musical texture of gamelan music. Each part has a predictable density—a different number of notes per minute (represented in the figure as a series of thick lines)—as well as a unique timbre (represented in the figure as a distinctive style of shading); thus, each part creates a distinct stratum that remains distinct even as it mixes and crosses the other parts (see Hood 1980:166–167).

### *Gender*

Another important “family” of musical instruments in Central Javanese gamelan is the *gender* family. In general, the term *gender* refers to a keyed instrument with keys much thinner than those of a saron-family instrument. These thin keys are suspended in air with cords rather than merely laid on a frame; as a result, the keys can vibrate more freely than the keys of saron-family instruments. Each *gender* key has its own resonating tube, which is “tuned” to the pitch of its corresponding key in such a way that it artificially prolongs the length of time that the key vibrates. Musicians play Central Javanese *gender* with very soft mallets; the combination of the soft attack and the long sustain makes the sound of a *gender*-family instrument more reminiscent of an organ than a bronze percussion instrument.

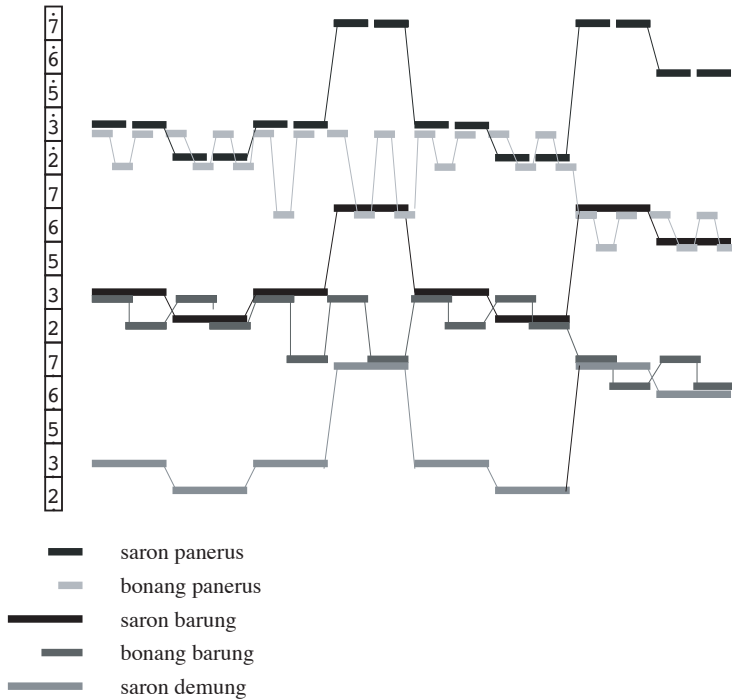


Figure 2.27. Stratification of balungan and elaborating parts for “Pangkur”

The largest member of the gender family, usually called *slenthem*, has six or seven keys; musicians typically play the balungan on the slenthem, using a playing technique that is essentially the same as saron technique. The slenthem’s range is one octave lower than that of the saron demung (and, in fact, it is the lowest-pitched melodic instrument in a Central Javanese gamelan ensemble); it adds yet another shade of definition to the balungan part.

The other two members of the gender family, the lower-pitched *gender barung* and the higher-pitched *gender panerus*, have fifteen keys each covering three octaves. The gender tuned to pelog include only five of the seven pelog pitches; that is, they are set up to represent one of the five-pitch pelog subsets. For this reason, there typically are two pelog gender barung included in a set of gamelan instruments; one tuned to the 7-6-5-3-2 subset and the other tuned to 6-5-3-2-1. There are likewise two pelog gender panerus.

Unlike a saron player, who hits the keys with a single mallet held in

his right hand and damps the sound of the keys by pinching them with his left hand, a gender player holds a mallet in each hand and plays two semi-independent melodic lines, one with each hand. The same hand that plays a key is also responsible for damping the key.

Gender players use their understanding of a piece's essential melody to put together a part composed of stock phrases. The stock phrases themselves are often called *cengkok*. The word *cengkok* can mean "melodic pattern," "melody," "melodic style," or even the "process of melodic movement" (Sumarsam 1995:230–231). One way gender barung players might conceive of a particular stock phrase is to think of it as an idiomatic way (that is, a gender-specific way) to get from one important place in a melody to the next. They may know several equally appropriate ways to get there, or they may decide that one way is more appropriate than the others. They may also decide to add or subtract a few notes, vary the rhythm, or otherwise modify the part to suit the character of the piece or the mood of the moment.

One consideration that gender players consider in creating their parts for a particular piece is the piece's *pathet*. Pathet refers to a Javanese musical system in which the different notes in a tuning system (or five-pitch subset) have different emphases. Most listeners accustomed to the conventions of Western music are aware that some notes feel more stable than others. Try humming the "Happy Birthday" song, but leave off the last note (the note that coincides with the song's very last "you"); the melody sounds as if it has been left up in the air. That last note in the melody is the "home base" (called a "tonic") of the musical system in which "Happy Birthday" is cast (the musical system is conventionally called a "major key" or "major mode"). The note that sounds up in the air is one of the pitches that is deemphasized in the major mode; that is why it sounds incomplete to end there. The general term for musical systems of this kind is *mode*.

There are three slendro pathet, all of which make use of the same five slendro pitches; the difference between the pathet is the musical emphasis (or deemphasis) assigned to each of the five slendro pitches. In other words, some pitches are made to sound more stable than other pitches; a pitch sounds more stable if it occurs consistently at the most rhythmically important spots such as the ends of phrases. A pitch becomes less stable-sounding if it is avoided at these spots. In *pathet manyura*, the pitches 6 and 2 feel the most stable, while pitch 5 is the least stable. In *pathet sanga*, in contrast, pitches 5 and 1 are the most

stable, while pitch 3 is the least stable. The third slendro pathet, *pathet nem*, like pathet manyura, makes 6 and 2 feel stable; pitch 3 (rather than pitch 5) is the least stable in pathet nem, however.

There are also three pelog pathet, each of which includes five main pitches, which are selected from the seven available pelog pitches. The five main pitches for *pathet barang* are 7-6-5-3-2 (omitting 4 and 1). The five main pitches for *pathet lima* are 6-5-3-2-1 (omitting 7 and 4); the five main pitches for pathet nem also are 6-5-3-2-1. In pathet lima, pitch 4 is sometimes used as an alternative note to pitch 3; in pathet nem, pitch 4 is an alternative to pitch 5. The pelog pathet also emphasize certain pitches within their five-pitch subsets and destabilize others.

The word pathet, in Javanese, means “to restrain” (Lindsay 1979:25), suggesting that pathet is a means for limiting and constraining the choices that musicians make. The different pathet also have different moods and feelings associated with them. Modal systems throughout the world associate particular moods and feelings with different modes. When hearing conventional Western music, for example, competent listeners tend to hear a song cast in the major mode (such as “Happy Birthday”) as “happy.” Songs cast in minor modes (such as Chopin’s famous “Funeral March,” for example) are generally perceived as “sad.” (For an extremely melancholy experience, try recasting “Happy Birthday” in the minor mode.) The emotional moods evoked by the Western modal system are, of course, not nearly so cut-and-dried as “happy” and “sad”; there is no doubt, however, that the extramusical content of modal systems is quite powerful for listeners.

These extramusical associations are particularly important when gamelan music accompanies *wayang kulit* (shadow puppet theater). Wayang kulit performances feature an enormous cast of puppet characters cut out of buffalo hide, carved with intricate patterns and painted with bright colors, mounted on a stick. All of the puppets are manipulated by a single puppeteer, called a *dhalang*, who also provides all the voices and narration, sings the *pathetan* (mood songs), and gives the gamelan cues. The dhalang puts the puppets against a translucent cloth screen, on which an oil lamp (or, more typically in modern Central Java, an electric light bulb) is shining. When viewed from the other side of the screen, the puppets cast evocative shadows that help bring a sense of life to the show. The performance can be viewed from either side of the screen. Wayang kulit performances typically last all night; the dhalang extemporizes the details of the story based on a general outline he has



mastered, much in the same way a Cirebonese dalang topeng crafts a unique dance choreography each time he or she performs.

In a wayang kulit performance, each pathet is associated with a different portion of these all-night performances. Slendro pathet nem pieces dominate the first third of the performance (from about 9:00 PM until midnight) and impart a sense of impending and growing tension. Slendro pathet sanga pieces accompany the scenes from the middle part of the performance and give them a profound, sometimes even peaceful, feeling. The action and excitement picks up in the last part of the show (about 3:00 AM until dawn), partially because of the feelings and moods associated with the pieces in slendro pathet manyura which accompany this part of the performance.

Gender players know many pathet-specific patterns, which they deploy with an understanding of the extramusical feelings that different pathet impart to listeners. In wayang performances, the gender player constantly plays pathet-specific phrases, called *grimingan*, in the background even when the other musicians are silent. This “noodling” keeps the pathet—and thus the mood—in everybody’s mind as the show progresses.

### *Vocal Parts*

Central Javanese gamelan music often includes singers. At times, an unaccompanied male vocalist sings a long, unaccompanied, virtuosic introduction, called *bawa*, to a gamelan composition. More typically, however, a chorus of men, called *gerong*, sing as a chorus in unison. Much Javanese music also features a female vocalist called *pesindhén*. Although there may be several *pesindhén* performing with the group, usually only one sings at any given time.

The parts played on bronze gamelan instruments, in keeping with the idiom of struck percussion instruments, tend to be melodically straightforward and rhythmically regular. The sung parts, in contrast, exhibit a kind of rhythmic freedom and melodic floridity that would be difficult to imitate on percussion instruments. Even the men’s choral parts, which are the least florid vocal parts (in part to facilitate singing them together as a group), seem to float on top of the percussive texture of the bronze gamelan instruments like rushing water swirling around a rocky streambed.

The words that the *pesindhén* and *gerong* sing are very often stock poems that can be sung with many different gamelan pieces. Tradi-

tional Javanese poetry, called *tembang*, is always sung rather than recited. Different poetic forms have specific melodies associated with them. The piece described above, “ladrang Pangkur,” actually shares a name with a Javanese poetic form (*pangkur*); a singer who wants to perform a poem cast in the pangkur form fits the words and lines of the poem to a standard pangkur melody that she already knows. Because the poetic forms specify the number of lines in each verse, as well as the number of syllables in each line, singers can use a single melody to set any poem cast in that form. The essential melody of “ladrang Pangkur,” like other Central Javanese pieces with names that reference poetic forms, may be somehow derived from one of these stock melodies for reciting poetry (Sumarsam 1995:205–211); the texts set to “Pangkur,” however, are often in different poetic forms.

The version of the balungan for “Pangkur” that is notated in Figure 2.20 and Figure 2.22 doesn’t provide enough musical “space” for an entire verse of poetry in the pangkur form; instead, the singers use stock texts in another form called *salisir*. Salisir verses are a sort of riddle in which the first two lines give clues to “mystery” words, and the second two lines somehow play with the “mystery” words suggested by the first two lines to express a moral, a lesson, or an adage. For example, a commonly-sung salisir verse is:

Parabe sang smarabangun  
 sepat domba kali Oya  
 aja dolan lan wong priya  
 geremeh nora prasaja

The first line alludes to an historical Javanese prince whose name, knowledgeable listeners will know, was Priyambada, while the second line means “a fish in the Oya river,” which suggests the delicious *gurameh* fish. Priyambada and gurameh do not have much to do with one another; they are simply the “mystery” words that provide the raw subject material for the third and fourth lines of the verse. The third line means “don’t play around with men”—the word *priya* (Javanese for “men”) recalls the name “Priyambada” to which the first line alluded. The final line means “chattering without thinking”—the word *geremeh* recalls the word *gurameh* alluded to in the second line (Hatch 1997). There’s another level of playfulness in this verse as well: The image of a big fish, in conjunction with the word for “man,” can be interpreted as

a slightly indelicate allusion to the male anatomy (Hood and Susilo 1967:35). Javanese listeners not only take delight in the clever ways that *salisir* verses connect seemingly unrelated words, they also appreciate the sound advice (to keep one's head when flirting with the opposite sex, in this case) that they provide, not to mention the subtly naughty allusions they sometimes make.

### *Other Elaborating Instruments*

Other elaborating instruments in Central Javanese gamelan include *rebab*, *suling*, *gambang*, and *celempung/siter*. *Rebab* is a bowed string instrument with two strings. Its body is made from half a coconut shell over which a thin animal skin is stretched. A long rod pierces the coconut; one end of the rod serves as a neck, while the other end provide a peg that the player can rest on the floor. Two strings are attached to large tuning pegs at the top of the neck, stretched over a bridge that rests on the skin, and fixed to the floor peg. The player bows the strings with a horsehair bow.

*Suling* is a bamboo flute with four or five holes. Players typically use separate flutes for *slendro* and *pelog*. Like a singer, a *suling* player times his phrases so that their ends coincide with rhythmically important musical events such as *kenong* and *gong* strokes. *Gambang* is a xylophone with nineteen or twenty wooden keys. Like *gender*, *gambang* is played with two mallets; because the keys are made of wood, however, their sound does not sustain and thus require no damping. *Gambang* players typically perform very fast melodic patterns, in which each hand plays the same melody in different octaves.

*Celempung* is a zither with metal strings which the player plucks with this thumbnails. There are two strings for each pitch, tuned the same and placed so close together that the player treats the pair of strings as if it were a single string. A typical *celempung* has about twelve pairs of strings. The *celempung* idiom is similar to that of the *gender panerus*.

### *Drumming*

Court-style Central Javanese gamelan ensembles include a variety of different drums. Like Cirebonese gamelan *sekaten*, Central Javanese ensembles often include a *bedug*—a large, barrel-shaped drum with skin heads attached to each end with large wooden pegs. When a musi-

cian hits one of the heads with a padded stick, it produces a very deep and booming sound. Bedug parts are usually quite sparse. Most of the drumming is provided by a different drummer, who has several different drums and styles at his disposal. These drums are generically called *kendhang*.

Kendhang are also two-headed barrel-shaped drums; their skin heads, however, are secured over the ends of the drum's body by a system of rawhide laces, and can be tuned by tightening or loosening the lacings. One head is always larger (and consequently lower-pitched) than the other. Kendhang players position the drum so that they can play one head with each hand. Although a drummer may occasionally use a stick, most kendhang playing exploits the different timbres and techniques that only bare hands can produce.

The drummer plays the most basic drumming patterns on two kendhang: a very large one called *kendhang gendhing*, supplemented by a small one called *ketipung*. Together, this pair is known as *kendhang kalih* ("two drums"). The large drum rests on a stand in front of the drummer, and the small drum rests in the drummer's lap (or on a second small stand) between the drummer and the large drum. The larger, lower-pitched heads are at the drummer's right.

The basic drum parts played on this pair of drums make use of only a few very simple drum strokes, which are sometimes given onomatopoeic names. The drummer plays the two main strokes with his right hand: *pung*—a high-pitched, ringing sound produced by hitting the ketipung with the forefinger; and *dung*—a low-pitched, booming sound produced by hitting the kendhang gendhing with the palm of the hand. He plays the remaining strokes with his left hand: *tak*—a sharp, crisp sound produced by slapping the ketipung with the palm and fingers; and *keteg*—a gentle, barely audible tap on the ketipung.

Many of the colotomic forms of Javanese gamelan music have specific kendhang kalih patterns associated with them. Kendang kalih drum parts are not particularly prominent in the rich texture of gamelan music, but all the other musicians pay close attention to them because subtle signals can be embedded within the patterns. Signals take the form of unobtrusive alterations to the "business as usual" patterns and let the other musicians know that the end of the piece, or a change in tempo, or some other adjustment is imminent.

Most Javanese gamelan include another drum as well, called *ciblon* or *batangan*, played by the same drummer as the pair of drums de-

scribed above. In size, it is between the pair's large drum and small drum. Ciblon drumming involves a great many more hand techniques and sounds and moves much more quickly than kendhang kalih parts. The name "ciblon" comes from a musical game played in the water, in which participants slap the water's surface to make pleasing sounds; a group of participants can amuse themselves by creating complex interlocking patterns with these sounds. The ciblon drum's rapid sequence of a variety of percussive sounds is reminiscent of the water game. Ciblon drumming is associated with the accompaniment of movement, whether it be dance or puppet manipulation. This movement-oriented style of drumming is commonly included in strictly instrumental performances as well, however, especially in more modern styles where the excitement and vitality of the ciblon drum patterns add a contemporary flavor to the music.

### *Modern Influences in Central Javanese Gamelan Music*

It often surprises Westerners who hear gamelan music for the first time to learn that its practitioners and patrons often had close dealings with Western colonial officials and Western music. Why, they may ask, is there not more Western influence in gamelan music? The answer is that there is indeed a great deal of Western influence in Central Javanese gamelan music; it is not, however, so much evident in sound of the music as it is in the cultural trappings and intellectual discourses that surround gamelan music. Ethnomusicologist Sumarsam (himself an accomplished gamelan musician) points out that the notions of "high culture" and "fine art" are Western ideas that have insinuated themselves into Central Javanese court gamelan music. He further suggests that the twentieth-century fascination with notating gamelan pieces and the rise in emphasis on the balungan part as the essential melody are also artifacts of Western influence. In incorporating these ideas into gamelan music, however, the overall structure of gamelan music and the sounds of gamelan instruments did not change appreciably; once again, gamelan proves to be an extremely flexible forum for combining old and new ideas.

The golden age of gamelan music in the kraton was the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries. The various sultans and princes had the financial resources at their disposal to support the arts in an extravagant way. Hubert Stowitts described a three-

day performance in Yogyakarta that involved 500 dancers and “combined orchestras of ten or more symphony orchestras”; such a massive production was hardly unusual. The kraton maintained a large coterie of musicians, who were organized into various ranks and classifications based on their seniority and abilities. A few of the highest-ranked musicians could even be promoted into the aristocracy.

Kraton performances were held in large pavilions with massive roofs but no walls called *pendopo*. The high roof, the marble floors, and the breezes kept the pavilions pleasantly cool; their sumptuous decorations, including intricate wood carving and crystal chandeliers, provide an elegant setting for the Javanese nobility’s grand artistic productions. The architecture also contributed to the gamelan’s sonic effect; the hard floors and cavernous ceiling added a subtle natural reverberation to the sound, while the open sides kept the volume in check. These pavilions often were connected to the verandas of the kraton buildings, enabling members of the royal family to make grand entrances.

One of the legacies of this period was the modern instrumentation of Central Javanese gamelan that combines the “loud” and “soft” ensembles into one large, coordinated orchestra. Combining these two different approaches to music-making in Central Javanese gamelan music was perhaps a way of modeling the changes of the modern world in a way that reconciles modern ways with old Hindu-Javanese notions of the universe. Layering linear musical approaches on top of the cyclical, colotomic foundations of Central Javanese gamelan music is perhaps a way of legitimating old Javanese systems of power in a new world. By refining the differences between court music and village music, the sultans invented something that conformed to European ideals of “fine art” to maintain their aura of power and prestige under changing circumstances. Subordinating music that “goes somewhere,” such as sung poetry, to fixed colotomic forms that model the Hindu-Javanese universe’s steady state, extols the divine right of rulers to rule and the persistence of old ideals in the modern world.

World War II and the Japanese occupation of Java brought significant hardships to Javanese of all social classes. After the war, the kraton continued their patronage of the court performing arts, but not on anywhere near the same scale as before. The new Indonesian national government, however, stepped in to sponsor Javanese performing arts.

These more recent government-sponsored developments in Javanese gamelan music continue the trend of modelling social ideals in musical aesthetics. The national radio station, Radio Republik Indone-

sia (RRI), promulgated one particular style of court music (from the Kraton Surakarta) in its broadcasts throughout Java. Musicians from outside the courts had the opportunity to hear and emulate this refined style as never before. The RRI musicians made influential recordings that amplified the effect. The government-run conservatories of music systematized and standardized much of the lore that surrounds Central Javanese gamelan music, reflecting the processes of standardization and bureaucracy that characterize the Indonesian government's approach to ruling the country. New gamelan compositions from conservatory-trained composers often deemphasize cyclic underlying structures, mirroring the government's position as a nation in the modern world and relegating the old-fashioned Javanese notions of the cosmos and kingship to the background.

Since the 1980s, a popular form of Javanese music called *campur sari* (which means something like "mixing essences") involved a self-conscious combination of Western musical instruments and approaches with gamelan instruments, sounds, and processes. The first campur sari experiments in the 1960s involved combining gamelan with old-fashioned Indonesian *kroncong* (a musical genre characterized by gamelan-like textures played on Western-derived string instruments such as guitar, mandolins, and cellos in conventional Western diatonic tunings). More recently campur sari bands have added elements of other popular Indonesian musics as well as instruments such as saxophones, Latin percussion, and electronic synthesizers. According to Rahayu Supanggah, Western instruments in campur sari ensembles—especially electronic keyboards—lend the ensembles a distinctly "modern" image and sound that many Javanese listeners find desirable (Supanggah 2003:7). Layering these sonic and visual symbols of technology and modernity on top of old-fashioned musical ensembles provides Javanese audiences a vehicle for coming to grips with the rapidly changing society in which they live.

At some level, all of these Javanese innovations represent attempts to reconcile and merge Javanese ideals, as symbolized by bronze gamelan, with other, outside concepts. It is not only in the realm of music that the past merges with the present; in twenty-first-century Yogyakarta, for example, the reigning Sultan (Hamengku Buwono X) is the governor of the province, while the prince of that city's second kraton (Paku Alam IX) is the vice governor; in Java, the charisma and authority these men acquired by virtue of their status as the hereditary leaders

of mandala states translates quite sensibly to a modern democratic system of government (Purba 2003). If we remember that many “Javanese” ideals themselves bear the unmistakable stamp of previous Hindu and Islamic influences, it becomes clear that the evolution of Central Javanese music is a microcosm of the layers of influence that characterize Javanese society past, present, and future.

### Eastern Java

The spread of the Kraton Surakarta’s style of gamelan music after World War II affected the kinds of gamelan music heard in the eastern part of Java as well. Although the majority of eastern Java’s residents speak the Javanese language, much of eastern Java lay beyond the “mandala” circle of intense influence from the Central Javanese courts. So, even those areas that are ethnically Javanese maintained their own unique regional styles of gamelan music; musicians in some of these regions still cultivated their regional styles alongside the more national Solonese style.

Except for a few minor differences in instrumentation and instrument construction, eastern Javanese gamelan are quite similar to the court gamelan of Central Java. The repertory of pieces is quite different, however, as are the elaboration techniques that the various instrumentalists use to generate their parts. The parts played on the bonang in eastern Javanese style are particularly distinct. The drumming, too, sounds quite different. As was the case for gamelan music for Central Javanese *wayang kulit* (shadow puppet performances), eastern Javanese wayang music features several *pathet* (melodic modes) to help set the appropriate mood for the different sections of the performance. The actual pathet system, however, is quite different from the Central Javanese version; eastern Javanese musicians have different names for their pathet, which have different musical characteristics and are associated with different time periods (Sutton 1991).

One peculiarly eastern Javanese genre that continues to be especially popular in the region is a theatrical form called *ludruk*. Ludruk casts are all male; some of the actors specialize in convincing transvestite performances. The stories they enact are of historical or topical interest (Sutton 1999). The signature music of ludruk is provided by a slendro gamelan on which the musicians play a uniquely eastern Ja-



	essential melody				3				2				3			5
<b>a:</b>	pancer		6		3		6		2		6		3		6	5
<b>b:</b>	double pancer	6		6	3	6		6	2	6		6	3	6		5

Figure 2.28. *Pancer transformation in eastern Javanese gamelan*

vanese repertory; music accompanies an opening dance (called *ngremo*), the characters' entrances and exits, and vocal interludes. The opening dance by itself has taken on the status of symbol of eastern Javanese-ness; just the sound of the accompaniment is enough to conjure the region's separate identity (Sutton 1991).

Eastern Javanese gamelan style makes considerable use of a musical process that is quite common throughout Java and Bali. One way to elaborate or expand a melody is to insert a new note between each of the melody's existing notes; when the inserted note is the same each time, musicians call it a *pancer*. In some eastern Javanese gamelan pieces, an essential melody goes through several different transformations, each of which involves the saron players adding a different pancer treatment. Figure 2.28 shows two eastern Javanese pancer transformations. The first version involves simply inserting a pancer note between the melody's essential notes (see Figure 2.28a); this process lengthens the melody without completely altering its melodic character. A second transformation, called a double pancer (see Figure 2.28b), extends the melody even further; it also lends a new rhythmic twist to the melody. Of course, the other instrumentalists must meet the challenge of coming up with elaborating parts that are suitably long to match the extended melodies (Sutton 1991:151).

Not all of eastern Java is populated by Javanese speakers; a few enclaves speak other languages or distinct dialects and maintain cultural traditions quite removed from the mainstream Javanese. One such group is the Osing, from the Banyuwangi area at the far eastern end of the island. The Osing trace their history to the Blambangan kingdom, which was part of the Hindu-Javanese Majapahit empire in the fourteenth century; until well into the twentieth century, the Osing endeavored to maintain a separate identity from the Mataram-influenced Ja-

vanese and identified more closely with the Hindu culture of Bali (close at hand across a narrow strait).

One contemporary Osing genre which has gained considerable renown throughout Java is called *gandrung*. Gandrung performances usually last all night; they feature a young, unmarried female singer-dancer, called a *gandrung*, who dances with male guests for a fee. The ensemble which accompanies the singing and dancing includes gongs and gong chimes, drums, as well as a pair of violins, which provide for the usual four functional layers of sound. One *gandrung* instrument—a metal triangle (called *kluncing*) similar to the instrument popular in classroom rhythm bands—is unique to the region (Wolbers 1986).

Regional Javanese styles and genres, such as Cirebonese *topeng*, Central Javanese court-style *gamelan*, and the Osing *gandrung*, are reminders that musical traditions in Indonesia are quite varied in instrumentation, sound, and function, yet they do indeed share many fundamental characteristics and musical processes. Many of the perceived differences in these traditions can be related to the unique historical, political, religious, and social environment of the people who make and consume music; the underlying musical processes produce different results depending on the circumstances in which they are put into practice.

## Bali

The tiny island of Bali shares much with Java, its larger neighbor to the west; the two islands are intertwined in history. Many of the underlying musical processes that drive Javanese musical traditions are also evident in Balinese music; yet, Balinese music sounds quite different from most Javanese music, even to uninitiated listeners. Once again, the distinctions stem from the different historical and social circumstances of the Balinese population.

Well over a thousand years ago, the Balinese had already built a society firmly grounded in the principle of mutual cooperation. Early Balinese deified the spirits of the rice that they cultivated and the water that made it grow, and developed complex cycles of rituals synchronized with agricultural cycles. Maximizing the production of rice required the careful monitoring of the flow of irrigation water as it moved from the high mountain lakes, down through the various farm-

ing communities, and finally to the sea, as well as the coordination of the different communities' planting cycles. The Balinese made these cooperative efforts a matter of faith by entrusting the administration of the irrigation systems and planting cycles to priests who maintained a complex network of water temples; even in the twenty-first century these priests and temples are an integral part of Balinese agriculture (Lansing 1995). At the same time, each family unit honored its own ancestors and cooperated with its immediate neighbors to make the local community run smoothly.

Indian philosophical ideas of the universe's cosmic cycles, the central authority of god-kings, and the influence of a spirit world on the world of humans gradually caught on in Bali as they were brought there by Hindu missionaries and Javanese immigrants late in the first millennium. These religious concepts complemented existing Balinese beliefs, and over the centuries the uniquely Balinese form of Hinduism emerged, with multiple ritual cycles to honor ancestors and local spirits, to control community life and agriculture, and to encourage mutual cooperation and social balance. Ritual activities were centered in the many temples that dotted the Balinese landscape, and involved artistic activities of all kinds, including the making of beautiful offerings as well as performances of music, dance, and theater.

Residents of Bali resisted the influx of Islam that swept through Java and other islands in the archipelago and remained staunchly Hindu. Some Hindu Majapahit princes from Java who chose to resist Islam found refuge in Bali as early as the thirteenth century (Tenzer 1991: 21), and brought with them into exile their retinues, including musicians, dancers, and other artists. Eventually the Javanese aristocrats (and artists) were incorporated into the highest classes of an increasingly stratified Balinese society (Belo 1970:xiv; Toth 1975:65; Wright 1978:6). In keeping with the Hindu-Javanese model of kingship, Balinese royal courts became centers of musical patronage and sponsored the development of a variety of new musical forms to exhibit their wealth and legitimize their high status.

Bali remained isolated from the rest of the world until the Dutch finally took over by force around the beginning of the twentieth century. Dutch conquest weakened and eventually eliminated the power and influence of the Balinese kings. The Balinese spirit of cooperation, grounded in faith and agriculture, however, had remained strong throughout the centuries, and provided a solid basis for a vibrant Bali-

nese performing arts scene even in the absence of royal patronage. In the twentieth century, Balinese community organizations assumed collective control of the performing arts; once again, the spirit of cooperation provided a solid grounding for a uniquely Balinese culture and enabled the Balinese to adjust to changing circumstances.

Balinese scholars sometimes organize the many Balinese musical ensembles that make up the contemporary Balinese music scene into three categories that correspond roughly to the three broad historical periods described above. The ensembles thought to belong to the old (*tua*) period (before the fall of Majapahit and the advent of powerful Balinese Hindu courts) are relatively small and emphasize metal or wood percussion instruments. The middle (*madya*) group includes a variety of large ensembles with drums and gongs that first developed in the royal households. The new (*baru*) ensembles include the various innovations that characterize twentieth-century Balinese music in the post-Dutch period.

Given this history, it may be tempting to think that Balinese music is what Cirebonese or Central Javanese music might have become without the influence of Islam or the West; of course, the development of musical styles is never so simple. It is difficult to determine the exact historical details of if, how, and why Javanese gamelan ensembles were incorporated into the lives of Balinese. Perhaps it is more fruitful to examine instead why Balinese performers and audiences, starting with the same raw materials and models as their Javanese compatriots, have developed such startlingly dissimilar musical ensembles, genres, and styles.

### ***Old Period: Gong Luang***

A few communities in Bali maintain a type of gamelan that is strikingly similar to gamelan sekaten, called *gong luang* (in Bali, the word *gong* often refers to an ensemble made up primarily of bronze percussion instruments that includes large hanging gongs). Many people believe that *gong luang* ensembles were brought to Bali from the Majapahit kingdom (Sukerta 1998:100), and most scholars assign it to the old category. Although the exact instrumentation varies among the six or so extant *gong luang* ensembles in Bali, they all include the characteristic instruments of the sekaten ensembles, including hanging gongs, a

large gong-chime played by several musicians, and various keyed metal instruments. The gong *luang* from the village of Tangkas also includes an instrument called *bedug* (Toth 1975:67), which is similar to the large *bedug* drum of the Cirebonese gamelan *sekaten*, but much smaller. Perhaps most significantly, these gamelan ensembles are tuned to a non-equidistant seven-pitch pelog tuning system.

### *Middle Period*

A seven-pitch pelog tuning system also characterized the *gamelan gambuh* of the post-Majapahit royal Balinese houses, whose primary purpose was to accompany courtly dance-drama productions that celebrated the stories and exploits of eastern Javanese heroes. Gamelan gambuh's melody layers were played on soft-sounding instruments—paired *suling gambuh* (large bamboo flutes) and *rebab* (spike fiddle)—over a colotomic framework played on a variety of gongs and gong chimes. Gamelan gambuh's repertoires, colotomic forms, and even the hand drumming style have exerted enormous influence on most subsequent Balinese music. Even though gamelan gambuh is rarely heard in the present (a group still performs old-fashioned gamelan gambuh in the Balinese village of Batuan), its characteristic melodies, forms, and aesthetics live on in more modern musical genres.

Among the most impressive ensembles of the middle period were the grand *gamelan gong gede*. These ensembles were enormous, in both sheer massiveness of the individual instruments as well as in the large number of instruments and musicians—as many as fifty—required to play them. Such ensembles provided the core ceremonial music for both court and temple ritual cycles. More streamlined versions of the *gamelan gong* ensemble continue to provide ceremonial music into the present. Both the instruments and the repertoires of gamelan gong also provided models in the twentieth century for the most ubiquitous new period ensemble: *gamelan gong kebyar*.

A variety of other ensembles waxed and waned in the middle period, such as *gamelan Semar pegulingan* and *gamelan pelegongan*, both of which combined melodies and colotomic forms from gamelan gambuh with melodic gong-chime and metallophone instruments similar to those of gamelan gong. These ensembles, too, provided models for more recent twentieth century gamelan innovations.

*Beleganjur*

Another musical legacy of the middle period is the portable processional ensemble, called *gamelan gong beleganjur*, which provides a sonic background for a variety of rituals. Because the music was meant to accompany many different ritual events, it had to be flexible as well; musicians were prepared to change the mood of the music (say, from serene to agitated) at a moment's notice to reflect the mood of the processional events. The various instruments—gongs, drums, and cymbals—are all designed to be played while marching.

Like Javanese gamelan music, beleganjur music is organized into four layers: colotomic framework, basic melody, elaborated melody, and drumming. Most beleganjur pieces are set to a single basic colotomic form, called *gilak*. Like Javanese colotomic forms, the unique “fingerprint” of this colotomic form emerges when each of the various colotomic instruments plays its own rhythmically regular part. Because each instrument has its own particular timbre, and because their parts are offset in time from one another, they interlock to produce a richly textured eight-beat cycle in which each beat has its own unique sonic signature. The cycle culminates with a stroke of the largest, lowest-pitched gong (called the *gong ageng*) in the ensemble.

The melodic parts in beleganjur are performed on small gongs; each musician carries and strikes a single gong, and each gong represents one of the four pitches in the tuning system; together, these four parts are called *reyong*. Once again, their individual parts interlock to create an essential melody as well as various elaborations. It is as if the ensemble's multigong gong chimes—a lower-pitched instrument to play the essential melody, and a higher-pitched instrument to play elaborating parts—have been broken down into their constituent components, and a single musician assigned to each, to facilitate carrying the instruments.

Two drummers lead the procession; their interlocking parts give signals to the rest of the ensemble following behind. The drums are reinforced by eight cymbal players, each carrying a pair of cymbals called *cengceng*; it is the strident and clanging sound of all those *cengceng* that gives beleganjur music its characteristic sound and volume. Sometimes the *cengceng* players all play the same part, but they frequently play interlocking patterns as well. The interlocking parts of the *cengceng* are illustrative of a general characteristic of Balinese interlocking parts: each individual part, rather than articulating a regular pulse, is

very fast pulse	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
cengceng strokes	x			x			x		x			x			x	
pulses between strokes	3			3			2		3			3			2	

Figure 2.29. Basic beleganjur syncopated cengceng part (after Bakan 1999:66)

rhythmically syncopated, but the composite of three or more of these syncopated parts is a smooth, impossibly fast regular pulse of percussive attacks.

The basic syncopated part spreads three cymbal strokes out over eight very fast pulses. The time interval between the first and second strokes is three very fast pulses. The time interval between the second and third stroke, likewise is three very fast pulses. The time interval between the third stroke and the beginning of the next repetition, however, occupies only the two remaining pulses. The whole pattern, therefore, is syncopated, and consists of two three-pulse strokes and one two-pulse stroke (see Figure 2.29).

Each of three cengceng players performs this exact same phrase, but each player takes care to begin on a different pulse than the others. The rhythmic displacement gives each part a different “role”: one is the “basic” version (*megbeg*), another is the “anticipator” (*nyandet*); and the third assumes the role of the “follower” (*ngilit*). The composite of the three parts includes at least one cengceng stroke on each of the very fast pulses in the phrase (see Figure 2.30). It would be humanly impossible for a single performer to play the cengceng so fast; in this way, then, the result of this kind of interlocking Balinese playing is greater than the sum of its parts. In practice, cengceng players often elaborate and vary this basic pattern, resulting in even more superhuman-sounding composite results. With several musicians doubling each of the various parts, the effect is magnified even further.

The four players of the small hand-held gongs that make up the reyong often use the same complementary rhythms as the cengceng players. Because each of the gongs is tuned to a different pitch, a fast, rippling melody emerges when the musicians play their interlocking parts. Other instrumental sections in the beleganjur ensemble also exploit similarly cooperative approaches; the two drums, for example, play the “same” part offset in time to produce a dizzyingly intricate composite pattern. Such figurations model the Balinese social ideal of mutual cooperation.

cengceng 1	x			x			x		x			x			x	
cengceng 2		x			x			x		x			x			x
cengceng 3	x		x			x			x		x			x		
composite	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

Figure 2.30. *Interlocking cengceng parts (after Bakan 1999:66)*

The ear-shattering and pulse-quickenning clanging of a gamelan beleganjur at full volume can be quite intimidating. It is no wonder that, hundreds of years ago, beleganjur accompanied Balinese armies into battle. Beleganjur also is associated with cremation and mortuary rituals (Track 5 on the CD that accompanies this book features a beleganjur ensemble playing for a post-cremation purification ritual called *memukur*); in this context, the ensemble accompanies a “battle” between the spirit of the deceased and the evil spirits who might hinder the soul’s journey. The beleganjur ensemble’s sounds provide an inspirational source of energy for the living and a sort of sonic ladder for the deceased souls to ascend in their afterlife journeys.

Although beleganjur is a time-honored Balinese tradition, it has not remained the same between the middle and new periods. Much about Bali has changed since the days when these ensembles spurred the armies of rival Balinese kings to fight. Modern beleganjur style is much less flexible than it used to be; groups rehearse diligently to memorize complex arrangements and execute them flawlessly. There is still, however, an emphasis on precision in executing interlocking parts, in which the composite effect is much greater than the sum of the parts. Many innovations in beleganjur music were inspired by musical developments in the new period *gamelan gong kebyar* groups. These new forms of beleganjur were nourished by the cultivation of a competition style (*kreasi beleganjur*) in Bali’s capital city, Denpasar, in the 1980s; their visual appearance has been embellished with dramatic choreography designed to be reminiscent of the movements of ancient Balinese warriors (Bakan 1999).

### *New Period: Gong Kebyar*

Balinese society, in accordance with its Hindu leanings, remained highly stratified until the twentieth century. Although some prominent



kings reigned over various Balinese kingdoms, none of these realms attained the kind of size, power, or influence of the Javanese Islamic kingdoms. Instead, these tiny Balinese kingdoms existed in relative isolation, from one another as well as from the rest of the world, and each developed unique traditions of its own. Music, dance, and theater played a vital role not only in the royal courts, but in the practice of Hinduism by ordinary Balinese; thus, gamelan music in Bali is the legacy of villages as well as palaces.

Dutch rule, beginning in the twentieth century, led to a lessening of Balinese kings' power and influence. Many of their valuable sets of gamelan instruments became the property of the surrounding communities rather than of the rulers. Balinese villagers had long been accustomed to working together to achieve common goals; neighborhood organizations governed the building and maintenance of common resources and areas (such as temples and meeting places). These village organizations, called *banjar*, applied the same organizational principles to rehearsing and performing gamelan music.

Dutch domination also facilitated increased communication between the various kingdoms of Bali. So, when some banjar in North Bali innovated an exciting new modern style of gamelan music based on existing temple gamelan ensembles, remote banjar heard about it, and the innovation spread throughout the island. This new style was dubbed *gong kebyar*. *Kebyar* means "to burst open" (like a flower) or "to flare up" (like a match). Inspired by this flamboyant new approach to gamelan music, artists from other parts of the island imitated the new style and contributed their own innovations to it.

As a result, in addition to the various regional styles of gamelan music, many of which continue to be performed, Bali is today the home of this peculiarly twentieth-century style of gamelan: *gong kebyar*. In keeping with its twentieth-century origins, its musical style reflects an increasingly egalitarian Balinese society. Its flashy exuberance is also an important component of Bali's international image as an international tourist attraction in the twenty-first century.

### *Gong Kebyar Instruments and Style*

Balinese gamelan ensembles feature the same *kinds* of instruments as gamelan on Java, but with some different details of construction and ways of playing. Similarly, the musical structure of Balinese gamelan music has much in common with Javanese music, although the sound

is much different. The instruments and style of gong kebyar music will serve as an illustration.

Balinese tuning systems, like Javanese tuning systems, are flexible; there are no widely accepted standards, and each ensemble has its own character. As we have seen, the archaic gamelan luang is tuned to the seven-pitch pelog system, which is essentially the same as the Javanese pelog tuning system. Other old-fashioned Balinese gamelan, such as gamelan gambuh and gamelan Semar pegulingan, also feature seven-pitch pelog tunings. As was the case with Central Javanese pelog, most pieces are set in a scale consisting of only five of the seven available pitches. Most pelog gamelan in Bali, including gong kebyar ensembles, include keys for only five pitches per octave, roughly equivalent to the Javanese scale earlier compared to “sol-fa-mi-do-ti,” that is, with very small and very large intervals. Other Balinese ensembles are tuned to a slendro scale, again comparable to Javanese slendro. One type of slendro ensemble, called *gamelan angklung*, usually includes only four of the five slendro pitches.

As in Java, the rhythmic structure of Balinese gamelan pieces is manifest in a colotomic framework played on various sizes of gongs. The largest gongs in a gong kebyar ensemble are called *gong ageng*; most ensembles include at least one, but no more than two, large gongs. They sound at the ends of large musical units. Subdivisions of the phrases delineated by the gong ageng are marked with a smaller hanging gong called *kempur*; even smaller subdivisions are marked with a tiny hanging gong called *kemong*. Once again, the names of the instruments are onomatopoeic; the second syllable of an instrument’s name provides a good idea of its timbre and relative pitch level.

In Central Javanese and Cirebonese gamelan music, the composite pattern produced by all of the colotomic instruments together outlines a steady beat or pulse, but none of them plays that beat explicitly. In the gong kebyar ensemble, there is an instrument that sounds this basic beat: a small gong laid horizontally on a frame, called *kempli*. Many other Balinese ensembles include similar instruments, with different names, to perform this function as well.

There are quite a variety of colotomic forms upon which Balinese gamelan pieces are based. Upon hearing music with a familiar colotomic form, a Balinese listener may immediately get a particular feeling associated with that colotomic form. The structure outlined in Figure 2.31, for example, is called *gegaboran*, and underlies pieces that

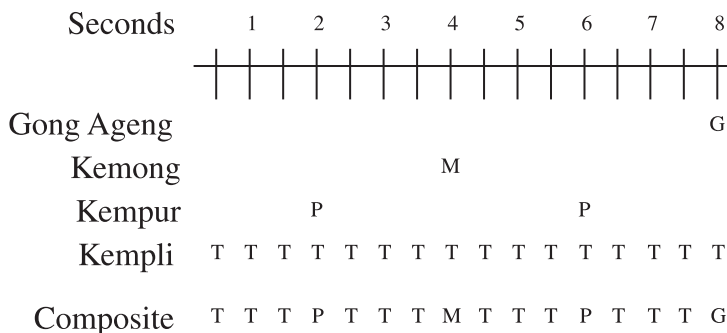


Figure 2.31. *Gegaboran colotomic form (after Tenzer 1991:43)*

accompany a graceful feminine offering dance called *gabor*. Music with this structure may therefore suggest the feeling one gets from experiencing a delicate female dance even when no actual dancing takes place (Tenzer 1991:43).

In Bali, saron-family instruments—keyed instruments in which all the keys share a common trough resonating chamber—are relatively uncommon. Although old period ensembles such as gong luang do include saron-family instruments (an alternate name for gong luang is *gong saron*), as do some middle period ensembles such as gong gede, new period ensembles include no saron-family instruments. There is a much greater variety of gender-family instruments, however. As in Java, each key of a gender-family instrument is suspended over its own resonating tube. In Bali, only gender-family instruments played with two mallets, using a technique comparable to Central Javanese gender technique, are actually called *gender*; other gender-family instruments, which are played with a technique similar to Central Javanese saron technique, have other names. A gong kebyar ensemble includes several sizes of gender-family instruments, each with a different musical function. Like Javanese music, all the gender parts for a piece are based on a same common melody; Balinese call this main melody *pokok*. The larger, lower-pitched gender-family instruments play more abstract versions of the pokok melody, while the smaller, higher-pitched instruments play more elaborated versions of the melody or figurations based on the melody.

One striking characteristic of many Balinese ensembles is that the keyed instruments come in matched pairs. The instruments in a pair

are virtually identical except for one important detail: The keys of one instrument are tuned to be slightly lower in pitch than the keys of the other. When the corresponding keys on the two instruments are stuck at the same time, the ear perceives not two dissimilar notes, but rather a single note that seems to shimmer and dance because it oscillates quickly between louder and quieter. This effect is the result of an acoustical phenomenon known as beating. The sound waves excited by the two keys interact with one another—sometimes strengthening each other so the ear hears more sound, sometimes cancelling each other out so the ear hears less sound. These variations in volume happen very quickly (several to many times per second). If the two pitches are relatively close, the result will be a fast shimmer; two pitches that are a little bit further apart will create a more leisurely undulation.

The lowest-pitched gender-family instrument in a gong kebyar ensemble has only five keys (one octave's worth of pitches) and is called *jegogan*. A gong kebyar ensemble includes a pair of *jegogan*. Each is struck with a soft mallet; together, they produce a deep, undulating, sustained sound. The *jegogan* part is very abstract and includes only the most important notes of the *pokok* melody; it moves very slowly. There is also a pair of *calung*, the next lowest-pitched instrument; they also have five keys, are struck with soft mallets, and provide the most elemental version of the *pokok* melody.

The remaining gender-family instruments have more keys than the lower-pitched instruments (covering about two octaves); their hard wooden mallets produce a much brighter, metallic timbre. These instruments are collectively called *gangsa*. The lowest-pitched *gangsa* is called the *ugal*; the *ugal* player is the leader for the entire *gangsa* section. Although the *ugal*'s range of pitches overlaps that of the *calung*, their parts sound quite distinct because of the different mallets with which they are played. The *ugal* part is a more elaborate and decorated version of the *pokok* melody. Figure 2.32 shows a Balinese gong kebyar ensemble.

The parts played on the remaining *gangsa* in gong kebyar ensembles—*pemade* (one octave higher than the *ugal*) and *kantilan* (one octave higher than the *pemade*)—are often sophisticated interlocking parts called *kotekan*. We have already seen that the various colotomic instruments in gamelan ensembles play parts that may be said to be complementary to one another because each part plays during the silences in the other parts so that the ear and brain are compelled to hear them



*Figure 2.32. Balinese gamelan ensemble in a temple courtyard, ca. 1920  
(photo and print collection of the Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal,  
Land- en Volkenkunde, Leiden, Netherlands)*

as a single musical entity. This technique of interlocking parts applies to other levels of music as well. Much Javanese and Balinese music features interlocking parts between two instruments that sound the same. *Kotekan* are interlocking parts, characteristic of gong kebyar and several other Balinese gamelan styles, that combine to create the illusion of a single melodic line that often sounds faster than any single human could possibly play. The ethnomusicologist Hardja Susilo once said about Balinese music that “half the group plays as fast as they can, and the other half plays as fast as they can, in between” (quoted in Vitale 1990:14 fn. 10).

*Kotekan* requires two performers; they perform their parts on instruments of similar range and timbre (sometimes the two players perform their parts together on a single instrument). The two parts are coordinated so that the second part fills in the gaps left by the first part so that those listening hear a single musical line. Composer Wayne Vitale suggests the following analogy: “One might imagine . . . the text on this page being read by two narrators, one of whom pronounces only the letters *a* through *m*, and the other *n* through *z*, yet fitting those sounds together so perfectly that we hear them as one speaker” (Vitale 1990:2).

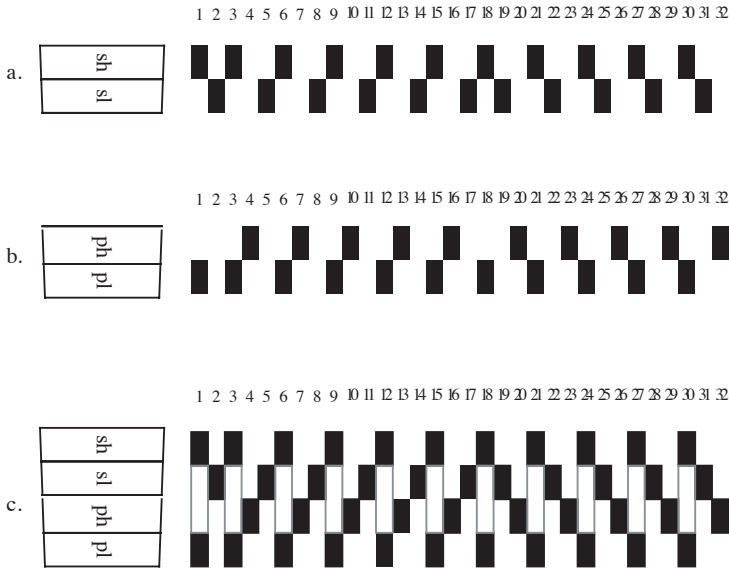


Figure 2.33. *Kotekan*. (a) *sangsih* part; (b) *polos* part; (c) *composite*

Typically, each of the two parts that combine in *kotekan* is limited to one or two pitches (that is, one or two *gangs* keys) only; limiting the number of keys each player has to worry about frees them to play their parts faster and more accurately. Because each of the two parts includes one or two pitches, the entire *kotekan* can encompass as many as four pitches. There are a number of techniques for fitting the two parts together. The particular *kotekan* style described in the following paragraphs is called *kotekan empat* and is among the more complicated approaches to *kotekan* available. The word “empat” means “four” and describes the number of pitches in the composite pattern that emerges from the combination of the two parts.

Figure 2.33a illustrates one of the two parts of an interlocking *kotekan* pattern—the upper part, called *sangsih*. The two bars along the graph’s Y-axis represent the two keys that the player of the *sangsih* pattern will use; they are labelled “sh” (*sangsih*-high) and “sl” (*sangsih*-low). The graph’s X-axis is marked off into 32 pulses (the length of the *kotekan* pattern); a black square beneath a beat’s number indicates that the *sangsih* player hits that key for that pulse. The graph illustrates that the *sangsih* part is composed of two- and three-note “bursts” separated by a pulse of silence. Figure 2.33b illustrates the other part—the lower part called *polos*. The two Y-axis keys are labelled “ph” (*polos*-

high) and “pl” (polos-low). The polos part, like the sangsih part, is composed of short “bursts” (one- and two-note bursts in this case) separated by a pulse of silence.

Figure 2.33c shows the two patterns combined. All of the silent pulses in the sangsih part coincide with a note in the polos part, and vice versa. The result is that a note is being played by at least one of the two players for every pulse; rather than hearing little bursts of notes separated by silences, the listeners hear one long, unbroken sequence of notes. In this particular kotekan pattern, the composite pattern starts with a series of four-note ascending melodic figurations; toward the middle it shifts to four-note descending figurations. Some kotekan patterns, such as the kotekan empat pattern illustrated in the figure, include pulses where both musicians play a note; the result is an even richer sonority (in the graph, the two notes’ boxes are connected by a gray line).

It is not too difficult for each player to perform the short one-, two-, and three-note bursts at breakneck speed; the composite of the two, however, would be impossible for a single musician to perform quite so rapidly. The two musicians must coordinate their patterns precisely, however, for the composite to emerge clearly. Which pitches each player hits depends on the notes of the main melody. As in Javanese music, the figurations dance above and below the main melody, but meet up with it at rhythmically significant junctures. In order to end up on the right pitch, the players must begin their patterns on the correct keys. As the melody moves higher and lower, so do the kotekan patterns.

The kotekan technique emphasizes skill in coordination to produce a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts. Because these patterns require such precision, there is no room for improvisation; the parts are carefully worked out in advance and rehearsed until the musicians can execute them without flaw or hesitation. Like the lower-pitched gangsa, the higher-pitched gangsa on which kotekan patterns are played come in pairs to achieve the shimmering acoustical effect. That means there must be a pair of instruments for each of the two parts that interlock to create kotekan, resulting in a total of four gangsa of each pitch range.

Gong kebyar includes a couple of gong chimes as well. Like Javanese bonang, these gong chimes consist of small pot-sized gongs suspended on ropes stretched across a wooden frame. Unlike Javanese bonang, however, all the pots are arranged into a single row, in order with the lower pitches to the player’s left. The *trompong* is the lower-pitched of

the two gong chimes; it has about ten pots, in approximately the same range as the ugal. A single musician uses two mallets to play a decorated version of the main melody. Trompong is an old-fashioned instrument, and is included only in pieces where this hint of nostalgia is desired. Because the instrument is so long, the trompong player's movements are athletic, almost dancelike.

A *reyong* is pitched higher than the trompong. It has about twelve pots and requires four players; two for each octave. The two lower-octave musicians play interlocking *kotekan* parts similar to those played on the gangsa. The two upper-octave musicians play the same *kotekan* patterns an octave higher. For each *kotekan* pattern, each player controls two pots. As the *kotekan* patterns move up and down the scale following the main melody, which two pots are controlled by which musician is continually changing and overlapping. The quartet must coordinate not only their musical parts, but also their body movements to avoid collisions.

All of this shimmering and interlocking creates a rich, busy, exciting sound. Balinese gamelan ensembles usually include some kind of cymbals to add even more noise and excitement. The quality of the sound of Balinese cymbals is suggested by their name: *cengceng*. Although some ensembles include pairs of handheld cymbals similar to the crash cymbals in a symphony orchestra's percussion section, most Balinese cymbals are relatively small, and a complete set of cymbals includes six or more. The player holds two of these small cymbals (one in each hand) and strikes them against the remaining cymbals, which are mounted on a wooden floor stand. With two hands alternating, an energetic *cengceng* player can play very quickly.

In keeping with the predilection for interlocking parts, gong kebyar ensembles often feature two drummers, who play interlocking parts. The drummers are responsible for starting and stopping pieces, controlling the tempo, and providing an interface between the gamelan musicians and dance, theater, or puppet manipulation. Track 6 on the CD that accompanies this book presents a gong kebyar piece that illustrates all of these musical features.

The island of Bali is home to many, many different kinds of gamelan ensembles. Bali's historical separation into small autonomous areas ensured that each region developed and maintained its own particular set of traditions. Communities still take great pride in maintaining the special ensembles and musical styles that are unique to their localities. As a result, the Balinese music scene is a riot of instruments, ensembles,



repertoires, and contexts. The Balinese people's devotion to the practice of Hinduism engendered many opportunities for the performances of distinctive music and dance traditions in the context of religious rituals. More recently, Bali's status as a destination for international "cultural tourists" has created still more contexts for musical activities.

The development of modern Balinese gong kebyar demonstrates how gamelan music has changed to reflect changes in Balinese society. Gamelan organization is like social organization. The fast interlocking parts mirror the close cooperation that villagers have cultivated to keep their communities running smoothly. When the royal courts disappeared, an existing village institution—the banjar—stepped in to assume ownership of gamelan instruments and patronage of gamelan music. Once again we see that the same underlying musical structure, with colotomic, melodic, elaborating, and drumming functions, provides a flexible framework for making music that suits the needs and desires of its audiences.

### Gamelan in the West

The social functions and underlying processes of music traditions shape the actual sounds that listeners hear; Indonesian musical aesthetics are intimately tied to Indonesian social values. The sounds of gamelan music have fallen on European ears ever since the first European explorers came to Java; beginning with the earliest contacts, Europeans were struck by the unfamiliarity of the music they heard. Some early visitors found the music to be unpleasant, such as Christoph Frick, who commented in 1676 about "some *Javians* coming down in a small Boat, making a mighty noise with some little Bells" (Frick 1929:141) and John Barrow, who described "drums and squalling flutes" in 1806 (Barrow, Truter et al. 1806:223). Others found the music merely strange; in 1795, Charles Thunberg said that the gamelan instruments he heard "have not a bad effect at a small distance" (Thunberg 1795:308), a sentiment echoed in 1828 by J. R. Logan, who commented, "at a little distance the sound is not unpleasing, though very monotonous" (Logan 1853:235).

The records from the first Dutch ship to sail to the East Indies in 1595–1597 includes some fascinating drawings of music and dance activities. According to its old Dutch caption, the illustration in Figure



*Figure 2.34. Early illustration of Javanese music and dance  
(Rouffaer, 1915: plate 25)*

2.34 shows performers dancing to the accompaniment of an instrument consisting of metal plates played in the manner of an organ, “singing a song, rhyming, arms and legs twisting, and the whole body turning, like dogs who come crawling out of their nests” (Rouffaer and IJzerman 1915:plate 25). These reactions, ranging from negative to indifferent, are not surprising, considering that European social values were quite at odds with the Javanese values that shaped the music these intrepid writers heard.

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, however, many Europeans (and Americans in the European tradition) became fascinated with the exotic sounds of music from the colonies. Gamelan ensembles from Java made appearances at several of the grand international “world’s fairs” or “expositions” that various cities hosted during this time. Some composers in the European tradition who were disillusioned with the Romantic musical idiom championed by the likes of Liszt and Wagner, which focused on forward-moving harmonic progressions and endless melodies, were eager to explore new sound possibilities. Claude Debussy, for example, was interested in sonorities—blocks of sound that didn’t necessarily lead the listener anywhere, but

which were beautiful moments in and of themselves. Among modern fans of European “classical” music, Debussy’s encounter with Javanese gamelan music at the 1889 Paris Exposition is the stuff of legend; while it is not clear exactly how deeply he delved into the inner workings of gamelan music, the sounds he heard had a definite effect on his compositional thinking. It is important to remember, however, that Debussy’s fascination with the timbres and sonorities of Javanese gamelan music had nothing to do with the music’s actual meaning; rather, he found the sounds—excised from the web of social significance which gave them their form—to fit serendipitously into his own social and aesthetic world.

There were a number of Europeans and Americans who travelled to Java and Bali to experience the performing arts there in the first half of the twentieth century. Many of these individuals were attracted to the Asian arts in general, and Indonesian music in particular, because they seemed to embody both a spirituality and a sense of permanence that they felt was missing from modern Western expressions; the connection of the arts to people’s daily lives was another attraction. Very often these expatriate Westerners felt compelled to somehow “translate” these ineffable qualities which they perceived in Indonesian arts into Western forms. The Canadian composer Colin McPhee, who lived in Bali for a number of years, used Balinese materials extensively in his compositions; some of his works are little more than transcriptions of Balinese pieces for Western instruments. For these artists, the appeal of Indonesian music lay primarily in its social values; they sought to transplant some of these values into their own cultures. Quite often, however, the values they saw were merely the values they wanted to see; from their vantage point as colonial masters, they often misinterpreted the privileges of the Indonesian nobility as a kind of utopian egalitarianism.

Following World War II, European and American ethnomusicologists took an interest in preserving gamelan music in Indonesia and promoting it in the West. The influential ethnomusicologist Mantle C. Hood, a specialist in Central Javanese gamelan music, advocated “bimusicality” (the musical equivalent of “bilingualism”) as an approach to cross-cultural understanding through music. He put his principle into practice by acquiring gamelan instruments for the UCLA music department (where he taught at the time) and inviting Javanese musicians (such as Hardja Susilo) to teach his students to play them. As Hood’s students started ethnomusicology programs at other

schools, they often included gamelan instruction as a part of the program. These ensembles continue to thrive in the setting of American higher education for a variety of reasons: They are visually stunning and aurally arresting, and so attract much attention; many of the instruments are relatively easy to learn to play; and the ensembles accommodate fairly large numbers of students. Because there are few Americans of Indonesian heritage, and most Americans know very little about Indonesia, there is little chance that ethnic identity politics might mar the students' innocent enjoyment of their gamelan music. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, possessing a set of gamelan instruments is a collegiate status symbol among American institutions of higher education.

Easy access to gamelan instruments, and to the Indonesian musicians who were brought to teach on them, provided American and European composers in the second half of the twentieth century with a wealth of compositional material. Some composers, such as James Tenney and Richard Felciano, used the instruments themselves as resources, without trying to imitate Indonesian musical processes. Other composers were intrigued by the musical processes they either read about or learned from Indonesian teachers, and incorporated them into their compositions.

The career of the composer Lou Harrison (1917–2003) straddled virtually the entire twentieth century and covers most of the approaches described above. He first heard live gamelan music at one of the last of the great international expositions (the San Francisco Golden Gate Exposition in 1939). He experimented with applying the Indonesian musical processes he read about in books and transcriptions to the pieces he composed for conventional Western instruments. Later in his career, he spent time studying Javanese, Balinese, and Sundanese music with Indonesian artists who visited California, and began to compose for gamelan instruments (some of which were imported from Indonesia, and some of which he built with the help of his long-time partner, William Colvig).

Harrison eschewed the normal 12-pitch equidistant “equal temperament” tuning system that dominates contemporary Western music; he advocated a return to *just* tunings in which the various intervals are not equidistant, but in which some pitches are carefully tuned so that the combination of some pitches is more acoustically “pure” than equal temperament will allow. Harrison was convinced that Javanese *slendro*

and pelog tunings were somehow related to the “pure” tuning systems he advocated for Western music, and he retuned his own gamelan instruments to such tuning systems. In this regard, Harrison, like many of his predecessors, imposed his own fantasies of the exotic onto Indonesian music. Some of Harrison’s most affective pieces combine solo Western instruments (horn, violin, and harp for example) with gamelan accompaniments—these compositions are, in effect, mini-concertos which place the Western instruments in a position of superiority in relation to the gamelan instruments. Although Harrison’s motivations for adapting Indonesian musical instruments and processes were unquestionably good, such pieces can also be interpreted as making the power imbalance between colonizers and their native subjects seem aesthetically beautiful—well beyond the putative end of colonialism!

### Indonesian National Music

The gamelan music of Java and Bali has spread well beyond its islands of origin; and just as gamelan musical processes model Javanese and Balinese social and political values, appropriations by Westerners of gamelan music relate to Western value systems. Gamelan music has been appropriated much closer to home as well, in service of Indonesian nation building. The nascent Indonesian government promoted a single national language (bahasa Indonesia); the same nationalists who supported a single national language, however, were divided about a national music. Some nationalist leaders supported hybridized music, with Western scales but Indonesian roots (such as *kroncong*, which accompanied songs in the Indonesian language with guitars, violins, and ukuleles). Others proposed that the best regional musics in Indonesia should be promoted as national music. The government eventually adopted a policy supporting “peaks of culture” from various regions; in other words, the “best” music and dance from each region would receive government support; music traditions that espoused values that the new government deemed questionable would be sanitized or eliminated. Central Javanese court gamelan, with its lofty aristocratic values, represented one such peak.

Of course, governments do not always have the final say in what music becomes popular and what music does not. Government arts policy has led to the preservation and support of various cultural peaks. It has

not, however, prevented the creation of hybrid musics. In Cirebon, for example, a style of music called *tarling* emerged in the 1970s and has been enduringly popular. The word *tarling* is derived from the names of the two main instruments in the ensemble: *guitar* and *suling*. Early *tarling* songs featured gamelan-like parts played on the guitars, supported by gongs and drums, with a *suling* (bamboo flute) melody floating above it.

Throughout Indonesia, a musical genre called *dangdut* is extremely popular. *Dangdut* songs are sung in the Indonesian language, and the musical accompaniment combines elements of Indian film music and Malay popular styles from the early twentieth century, with hints of international rock'n'roll. Although many people once looked down on *dangdut* music as "low class," in recent years its respectability has risen considerably; in some ways, it is assuming the status of the *de facto* Indonesian national music.

Despite these innovations, however, gamelan music remains an important expressive form for many Sundanese, Javanese, and Balinese people. It is performed side-by-side with more cosmopolitan and more Western-sounding styles. Many Indonesians see no contradiction in continuing to cultivate musical styles with very different sounds. Gamelan music in Java and Bali provides a model of traditional society in sonic form. Gamelan's primarily metal instruments evoke the power—both material wealth and spiritual potency—symbolized by bronze and exemplified by god-kings. The four layers of functions (colotomic foundation, melody, elaboration, and drumming) mirror a stratified social organization as well as a concept of the cosmos. The way that musicians compress pieces in their memories and expand them in performance mimics an approach to the role of the individual in a steady-state universe.

This is not to say, however, that gamelan music is inflexible. Regional variation in gamelan music in Java and Bali demonstrates how these principles are manipulated, adjusted, and changed to meet new social needs and absorb outside influences. Developments such as *tarling* and *campur sari* (combination of electric guitars and keyboards with gamelan instruments) demonstrate once again the flexibility of gamelan instruments and musical structures. By manipulating the various structures and processes of gamelan music, musicians and listeners are able to experiment with the structure and processes of their own lives and social relationships.

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## *Chapter 3*

# Gamelan Traditions in West Java

Chapter Two introduced some Indonesian musical processes associated with gamelan music in Cirebon, Central Java, East Java, and Bali, and demonstrated how the same processes result in different musical sounds depending on historical circumstances and social values. The next two chapters will examine yet another region—West Java—and some of the Sundanese music that thrives there. The Sundanese people have been embroiled in the same historical forces that shaped the rest of Java; in many ways, however, they have been at the margins of Javanese history. This chapter covers two Sundanese gamelan styles; Chapter Four will examine modern developments in Sundanese music and dance.

The mountainous interior of the modern Indonesian province of West Java is populated primarily by people who speak the Sundanese language. They call the highland areas of West Java “Parahyangan”—the land of the gods. A more common name, “Priangan,” was first applied to the region when it was taken over by the Central Javanese kingdom of Mataram (Lubis 2000:77), and probably derives from the name Parahyangan. The Priangan includes two high plateaus (about 2400 ft above sea level) surrounded by high volcanic peaks (up to 5700 ft). The Sundanese are the second largest ethnic group in Indonesia (about 30 million people in 2000), outnumbered only by the Javanese in central and eastern Java. The Sundanese-dominated part of West Java also includes some of the lowland areas surrounding the interior mountains and plateaus, but does not include Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia, or the areas surrounding it.

Although Sunda is an old word, and a minor kingdom called Sunda existed in West Java during the eleventh century, it is not completely

correct to use Sunda as a place name. Strictly speaking, the term refers to a group of people (the Sundanese) rather than to a particular place (Ekadjati 1995:8), and in Indonesian languages the word typically is used as an adjective, not a noun. The term *urang Sunda*, for example, means Sundanese people, *basa Sunda* means the Sundanese language (Koentjaraningrat 1972:54), and *tanah Sunda* or *tatar Sunda* means the Sundanese homeland (Lubis 2000). In English, it seems sensible to use Sundanese as an adjective, and refer to places with names such as West Java (the Indonesian province that includes the Sundanese-dominated areas as well as some Javanese-dominated parts along the north coast) or the Priangan (the traditional name for the Sundanese highlands). A newer term—Pasundan—has been attached to the region by some in the past century, usually with overtones of asserting a separate, Sundanese self-determination in response to a strong Indonesian republic.

The Priangan was a cultural backwater for most of recorded history (Wessing 1978:8). Early Hindu kingdoms in West Java (such as the aforementioned Sunda kingdom) were small and not based on trade and wet-rice cultivation like more powerful states in Central Java and Sumatra. As a result, the Sundanese area was a remote region away from centers of civilization, often serving as a buffer zone between larger powers. The area's only major Hindu kingdom, Pajajaran, arose after the collapse of the powerful Srivijaya empire in Sumatra in 1333 AD.

The Central Javanese Majapahit kingdom claimed sovereignty over Pajajaran, but Pajajaran did not acknowledge Majapahit's authority; the Pajajaran rulers managed to retain control over a fairly large area. A Javanese poem called the *Kidung Sunda* describes a fourteenth-century incident that illuminates the conflict. As the story goes, the Prime Minister of Majapahit, Gadjah Mada, arranged for the young king of Majapahit, Hayam Wuruk, to marry the princess of Pajajaran to acquire sovereignty over Pajajaran. When the wedding was about to take place, the Pajajaran faction insisted that the new bride be treated as a queen; Gadjah Mada, however, insisted that she would be nothing more than a concubine. Instead of a wedding, there was a gruesome slaughter; the nobles of Pajajaran refused to submit to Majapahit and Gadjah Mada's forces slew them all. Although Gadjah Mada is now regarded as an Indonesian national hero because of his early efforts to unite the Indonesian archipelago, he represents for the Sundanese an oppressor—a symbol of domination of the Sundanese by outsiders.

The Priangan has been under the political control of non-Sundanese for many hundreds of years. Pajajaran may have survived its

run-in with Majapahit and Gadjah Mada, but it finally fell to powerful Islamic city-states on Java's north coast, and eventually came under the control of Central Java's Islamic Mataram kingdom in the seventeenth century. Mataram governed its Sundanese subjects by setting up political units, called *kabupaten*, governed by Sundanese aristocrats called *bupati* (ministers) who were loyal to Mataram. (The political unit roughly equivalent to a county still is called a *kabupaten* in modern Indonesia.) These bupati emulated the grand style of their Mataram superiors, and acquired many trappings of status and power from the east, including bronze gamelan ensembles. European colonial powers (first the Dutch East Indies Company, then England, and then the Netherlands) followed Mataram's lead in administering their West Javanese territories (including the rich tea plantations) through the established authority of Sundanese bupati.

The Dutch administration, hoping to prevent the establishment of a strong Indonesian republic after the Japanese occupation ended after World War II, promoted the establishment of a semi-independent state in West Java called Negara Pasundan (Sundanese Nation). Led by traditional Sundanese aristocrats who cited hundreds of years of history as precedent, Negara Pasundan sought to assert Sundanese sovereignty over their traditional homeland (Cribb 1984; Sjamsuddin 1992). The movement ultimately was unsuccessful, however, and the Sundanese-dominated areas are now an integral part of the Indonesian nation.

Despite the imposition of authority from outside, legends and stories of Pajajaran have been kept alive in the Sundanese imagination into the present, often through the medium of epic narrative songs called *pantun*, and several musical instruments and traditions are considered to be indigenous to the Priangan, including *kacapi* (zither), *tarawangsa* and *rendo* (bowed lutes), and *angklung* (bamboo rattle). One uniquely Sundanese modern musical genre, called *Cianjuran* or *tembang Sunda*, is closely associated with the memory of Pajajaran. In keeping with this association, its songs often speak of the distant past and its accompaniment features indigenous Sundanese instruments such as *kacapi* and *suling* (bamboo flute). The sound of a *kacapi* (see Figure 3.1) is sometimes intensely nostalgic for Sundanese listeners, even though they may not know exactly what they are yearning for.

An isolated enclave of Sundanese people called the Baduy maintain many indigenous Sundanese musical traditions. According to popular mythology, the Baduy, who live in the mountainous area southwest of Jakarta, are the descendents of Pajajaran aristocrats who managed to



*Figure 3.1. Tembang Sunda ensemble featuring vocalists Teti Affienti (left front) and Tintin Suparyani (right front), with accompanists Gan-Gan Garmana (kacapi; left rear), Iwan S. (suling; center rear), and Cucu S. (kacapi rincik; right rear) (courtesy Sean Williams)*

escape the conquest of the court in 1579. Although this origin is unlikely, the Baduy do indeed regard themselves as guardians of Sundanese lands and traditions, and modern Sundanese look to the Baduy as models of indigenous Sundaneness. Baduy practice dry-rice farming instead of the wet-rice cultivation that characterizes the rest of West Java; wet-rice farming techniques, including the complex irrigation technology they require, are part of the legacy of Mataram. Baduy religious and ceremonial life revolves around the agricultural cycles of planting and harvesting rice (Zanten 1995). There are about 5000 Baduy, living in about 45 villages. A few of the most isolated villages are particularly stringent in their preservation of traditional practices; residents of these villages are called the Inner Baduy. They are insulated from the outside world by the Outer Baduy. Inner Baduy men typically wear a white headcloth, while Outer Baduy men wear a distinctive blue-and-black patterned headcloth.

During the rice-planting season, Baduy men play *angklung* music, both for entertainment and for rituals. An angklung is a bamboo rattle consisting of a rectangular bamboo frame in which two or three bam-

boo tubes, tuned to various octave equivalents of a single pitch, are suspended. The player holds the bottom of the frame firmly with the left hand while steadying the top of the frame with the right hand. By vigorously shaking the bottom of the frame, the player causes the suspended tubes to vibrate, creating a pleasing tremolo sound with a clear pitch. The ritual performances chronicle the villagers' interactions with the goddess of rice—first they awaken her with angklung music, then they celebrate her engagement to be married to the earth. Several weeks later they play once again to protect the goddess and the earth from disease. The Baduy angklung ensemble includes nine angklung of various sizes, each tuned to a different pitch. Each angklung is played by a single musician (except for the two highest-pitched angklung, which are both played by a single musician). The ensemble also includes three drums. The participants sing and dance to the accompaniment of the angklung ensemble.

Since the sixteenth century, being Sundanese has involved conforming to the expectations and standards set by ruling outsiders while maintaining some sense of "Sundanese-ness." Until the twentieth century, Sundaneseness was mainly the concern of an aristocratic class (called the *menak* in Sundanese) who interacted in various capacities with the foreign overlords of West Java; commoners were keenly aware of class differences between themselves and the Sundanese menak, but less aware of non-Sundanese ways of living in the outside world.

Gamelan ensembles were one artifact of outside rulers that Sundanese aristocrats adopted and made their own; developing uniquely Sundanese styles of gamelan music served as a way to emulate foreign rulers while delineating a specifically Sundanese identity. Gamelan music eventually spread to the lower classes as well and is an integral part of Sundanese music. Gamelan is so well integrated into Sundanese culture that even the self-consciously old-fashioned Baduy—at least the Outer Baduy—play gamelan music. The Inner Baduy avoid instruments made of metal, and even the Outer Baduy restrict the time of year in which gamelan music may be played to the months between the end of the harvest and the beginning of planting. The Baduy gamelan is similar to modern Sundanese gamelan *salendro*, suggesting that Baduy gamelan is a relatively recent innovation.

The recognition of a history that is separate from the rest of Java is the key element of a modern Sundanese identity. The legends of the aristocrats of Pajajaran as well as the maintenance of traditional Sun-



*Figure 3.2. Diatonic angklung ensemble (courtesy Sean Williams)*

danese ways by the Baduy contribute to a sense of Sundanese-ness. Angklung has become a veritable symbol of Sundanese culture. In the 1930s, it occurred to a Sundanese musician named Daeng Sutigna that an angklung ensemble was similar to a Western handbell choir (Perris 1971). In a handbell choir, each musician is responsible for two or three bells; by watching the music and the conductor, each musician knows when to play a particular bell. A well-rehearsed handbell choir interlocks the individual parts to produce sophisticated melodies and harmonies. Daeng Sutigna's clever idea was that angklung, tuned to a diatonic scale, could replace the handbells to provide an inexpensive means for music instruction in West Java's emerging educational system.

In diatonic angklung music, Western approaches to musical organization have replaced the four functional layers that characterize gamelan (and traditional angklung) music. As in a handbell choir, several musicians divide up the notes of a melody between them. Some special angklung include bamboo tubes tuned to the different notes of a chord, so that a few special angklung can provide a chordal accompaniment. Sometimes very large, low-pitched angklung provide a bassline; sometimes a string bass is added to the ensemble to provide the bass. Diatonic angklung groups (see Figure 3.2) perform arrangements of once-popular Western tunes, such as the "Blue Danube Waltz," as well as renditions of Indonesian popular songs and diatonized Sundanese folk songs.

Diatonic angklung music may not sound as exotic to Western ears as gamelan music, but it still exemplifies Sundanese (and Javanese) val-

ues. The instruments are constructed from bamboo—a material that is intimately connected with the land and the cultures of Java. And although the musical organization departs from the four functional layers that characterize much Javanese music, the group's organization maintains one of the most significant Javanese musical processes: interlocking parts.

Nevertheless, a variety of gamelan ensembles derived from Javanese models are an integral part of that unique Sundanese identity as well. Although gamelan ensembles came to West Java as symbols of outside authority and power, in the ensuing centuries an astonishing variety of regional styles and repertoires have flourished. Throughout these centuries Sundanese musicians have adapted those aspects of foreign cultures that appealed to them, including not only gamelan, but ensembles with Western instruments, such as brass bands (Heins 1975; Yampolsky 1994) and string bands (Harrell 1974:12). The borrowings always take on a distinctly Sundanese flavor. Their foreign origins are obvious, but so is their Sundanese-ness.

### Archaic Gamelan Ensembles

It seems likely that the gamelan instruments that arrived in West Java from Mataram would resemble the ceremonial gamelan that are the valued heirlooms of the Central Javanese and north-coast palaces—namely, gamelan sekaten (see Chapter Two). While there are very old gamelan that do resemble gamelan sekaten in the Priangan, they are not the property of the palaces (that is, the kabupaten in the Sundanese case), but rather are the valued community property of a handful of small villages. Such ensembles are called *goong renteng*, among other names.

Some scholars speculate that goong renteng ensembles were played in the courts of the Pajajaran empire. When the north coast city-states conquered Pajajaran, some stories tell us, they took the heirloom goong renteng instruments from Pajajaran to the courts of Cirebon, where they have come to be called *denggung*, and where they are still housed and played on special occasions. Cirebon royalty regards these ensembles as “foreign” (i.e., Sundanese) (North 1982; North n.d.). Others suggest that renteng-like gamelan instruments came to West Java only after Mataram took control of the Priangan, and that the Sundanese villages came into possession of goong renteng instruments



as “hand-me-downs” from the kabupaten, which may have replaced them with more up-to-date instruments as tastes and fashions changed (Heins 1977:142).

In either case, it seems likely that these old sets of instruments represent some kind of window into the past. A few villages maintain these old instruments, and in keeping with their probable shared heritage with sekaten ensembles, many villages bring them out for the celebrations of Maulud (the prophet’s birthday). As the ensembles grew older and hoarier, they became increasingly venerated. Some goong renteng ensembles are believed to possess remarkable powers; playing the ensemble in Lebakwangi (not too far from Bandung), for example, often brings rain.

Each of the surviving goong renteng ensembles differs from the others in significant ways; over the years, some ensembles have lost or added instruments and assigned different names to similar instruments. For example, the goong renteng in Lebakwangi includes a large one-row bonang, a saron-like instrument with many keys called *gangsaa*, a gong without a pencon called *beri*, a drum, and two large gongs (Soepandi 1977). In Guradog (near Banten), the bonang is called *koromong*, and the saron-type instrument is called *selukat*. The ensemble at Cigugur includes mostly the same instruments, but the saron-like instrument is called *cecempres*, there is no *beri*, and there is an additional *kenong*-like gong chime called *panglima* (Soepandi and Atmadibrata 1976). A set from Leuwiliang (near the city of Sukabumi) adds a double-reed wind instrument called *tarompet* (Sastramidjaja 1978). The sets of instruments in Cikebo and Cileunyi (near Tanjung Sari) have even fewer instruments: a bonang-type instrument called *kokuang renteng*, two gongs, and drums (Soepandi 1977; Soepandi and Atmadibrata 1976). Figure 3.3 is a photograph of goong renteng instruments formerly housed in the Museum Negeri Sri Baduga in Bandung.

There are some common features of these unique ensembles—features that characterize other archaic gamelan, such as sekaten, as well. They all feature a one-row gong chime (named bonang, koromong, or kokuang renteng), a pair of gongs, and drums. Many include a saron-type instrument (*gangsaa*, *selukat*) as well. They all feature pelog-like tuning systems.

Most of these ensembles have a limited repertory of pieces; in keeping with the ensembles’ venerated status, musicians make efforts to avoid modifying the pieces they play. Nevertheless, as each generation



*Figure 3.3. Goong renteng instruments (Henry Spiller)*

of musicians passes along the repertory and style to the next, inadvertent changes and innovations creep in. Sometimes musicians remember the names of pieces that used to be played but which have been forgotten. As instruments break, go out of tune, or become too fragile to play, the musicians make adjustments in what they do. As a result, each of the goong renteng ensembles features a truly unique sound, playing style, and repertory.

Like the gamelan sekaten in Central Java and Cirebon, the meaning of goong renteng music lies chiefly in its symbolism—the instruments themselves are tangible signs of the ancestors, while the sounds represent a perceptible, yet ineffable, link to the past. Although people recognize the significance of goong renteng music, they are rarely able to articulate exactly how it acquires its potent meaning. One particularly verbal musician, however, once provided ethnomusicologist Ernst Heins with a detailed account of the music's significance in the village of Lebakwangi.

Much of the message, the musician explained, arises out of the names of the pieces; each title suggests a web of meaningful connotations and associations. The specific sequence in which the pieces are played, then, provides its listeners with a sort of abstract allegory or philosophy. The title of the first piece, for example, is "Sodor" (literally "lance," but also suggesting "to thrust out" or "to present"); as a gift, then, the piece honors those in attendance and attracts their attention. Each subsequent piece title suggests a quality to strive for or advice for

good living; its position in the sequence and relationship to the other titles further contribute to a coherent philosophy of life. The sum of all the pieces represents a lesson in how to conduct oneself with honor, humility, and dignity (Heins 1977:124–132). It is not enough merely to recite, list, or know the piece titles, however; the discipline of playing and, most importantly, hearing the pieces unfold over time is an integral part of conveying their meaning (Zanten 1997).

### **Music for Dance and Theater: Gamelan Salendro**

During the period of Mataram control, many Central and East Javanese people moved to West Java, bringing with them Javanese culture, including wet rice cultivation, *batik* (wax-resist dying), gamelan, dance, and *wayang* (Heins 1977:15). Even today, in the small city of Sumedang, the old kabupaten building, now the Prabu Geusan Ulun Museum, proudly exhibits several sets of heirloom gamelan instruments as symbols of its rich history.

#### ***Gamelan History***

After the fall of Pajajaran in 1579, one of its vassal states, the kingdom of Sumedanglarang, appropriated Pajajaran's collection of heirlooms (including the celebrated gold crown of Pajajaran's most famous king, Prabu Siliwangi). By possessing these heirlooms, the ruler of Sumedanglarang, who was named Prabu Geusan Ulun, laid claim to all the lands of Pajajaran. He managed to maintain some semblance of independence for many years, although he never did wrest the fallen Pajajaran lands he claimed from its conquerors. Sumedanglarang eventually fell under the control of Mataram; this new satellite region, combined with other conquered areas, was named Priangan, and its aristocrats became bupati who ruled under the authority of the king of Mataram.

One of the heirloom gamelan in the Sumedang kabupaten, a gamelan salendro with the name Panglipur (actually Panglipur is a court title rather than a proper name), dates from the time when Pangeran Rangga Gede was the bupati (1625–1633), shortly after the Mataram takeover. Another heirloom gamelan, named Sari Oneng ("Essence of

Longing”), is reputed to have been crafted in Mataram; its presence in Sumedang dates back to the time of Pangeran Ranga Gede’s successor, Pangeran Penambahan. In the seventeenth century, these gamelan sets represented the link between the rulers of Sumedang and their Central Javanese overlords and served as symbols of the Sumedang nobility’s authority to govern.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, however, Mataram ceded control of the Priangan to the Dutch East Indies Company as payment for their help with a nasty political problem at home. Although the Company continued Mataram’s policy of administering the area through the “native” aristocrats (the *bupati*), under Dutch control the easy flow of Javanese culture stopped. The ethnically Javanese but culturally distinct areas of Cirebon and Banten, in northern West Java, however, continued to be important influences.

The bupati nevertheless continued to model themselves and their kabupaten after the royal courts of Central Java. These aristocrats could and did travel east, and kept up with new developments they found there. Sundanese kabupaten flaunted their status and secured their position with gamelan instruments modeled after Central Javanese ensembles. The flow of ideas and fashions between Sundanese and Javanese cultures never completely stopped; newer innovations in Central Java eventually found their way west as well. Thus, the instruments of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Central Javanese gamelan were imported to West Java. Once again, the heirlooms in the Prabu Geusan Ulun Museum provide a window into these developments. Several gamelan from the time of the Sumedang rulers Pangeran Kornel (1791–1828) and Pangeran Sugih (1836–1882; see Figure 3.4) take their places of honor beside the older gamelan.

One of the nineteenth-century sets of instruments now in the Prabu Geusan Ulun Museum in Sumedang even helps to tell the story of the Western world’s first contact with gamelan music. Inspired by artifacts and tales brought back by adventurers and colonial officials from Africa and Asia, Europeans and Americans developed an intense curiosity about the customs of the rest of world during the late nineteenth century. One means to satisfy their curiosity was international expositions—grand world fairs which featured exhibits of the latest technology, latest fashions, and quite often performers and craftspeople from various African, Asian, and American colonies. Dutch plantation owners exploited the world’s fairs as a forum to publicize the cof-

*Figure 3.4. Pangeran Surya Kusuma Adinata (a.k.a. Pangeran Sugih), ruler of Sumedang, 1836–1882 (photo and print collection of the Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde, Leiden, Netherlands)*



fee and tea products from their East Indies plantations; and they sent gamelan instruments, musicians, and dancers to the expositions to attract the attention of the crowds.

The set of gamelan instruments named Sari Oneng Parakansalak, now housed at the Prabu Geusan Ulun Museum, was forged in Sumedang around 1825; the name Parakansalak refers to the enormous tea plantation near the city of Sukabumi to which it belonged. Although it is now kept in Sumedang, the Parakansalak plantation administrators sent the gamelan, along with contingents of musicians and dancers, to expositions in Amsterdam in 1883 and Paris in 1889. The plantation owners' motives were mainly commercial; they wanted to attract attention to the coffee and tea products they were producing and exporting (see Figure 3.5). It was the gamelan performances at the Paris Exposition that Debussy heard.

The plaque at the Prabu Geusan Ulun Museum claims that this gamelan also was sent to the World Columbian Exposition in Chicago

## JAVA VILLAGE, MIDWAY PLAISANCE.

Attention of the public is called to the TEAS and COFFEES sold in cups and small packages at the Tea and Coffee Booth. Tea from the famous Sinagar and Parakansalak Plantations. Tea, like coffee, is not Indigenous to Java. The great success following the introduction of coffee culture induced the planters to try the cultivation of tea. The success attending this has been so phenomenal that the Java planters have determined to put this production on the American market, being sure the excellent quality of JAVA TEA will be soon recognized by the American People.

While in the Village do not fail to visit the JAVA THEATRE, a reproduction of the Sultan's Theatre at Solo, directly opposite the Coffee and Tea Booth.

While in the Agricultural Building please visit our TEA, COFFEE, SPICE and FIBRE exhibit in JAVA SECTION, EAST GALLERY.

THE JAVA AMERICAN EXHIBIT CO.



Figure 3.5. Advertisement for the Java Village at the 1893 World Columbian Exposition in Chicago ("Java Village" [advertisement]. 1893. World's Fair Puck 12:143)

in 1893 (see Figure 3.6). This cannot be true, because that set of instruments still is in Chicago—it was sold to the Field Museum in that city, where it remains to this day. It appears, however, that the Chicago gamelan is, for all intents and purposes, a replica of the Parakansalak gamelan; both gamelan share features that are quite distinctive, especially the saron stands which are carved to look like two-headed lions (see Figure 3.7).

Among the technological marvels showcased at the Chicago Columbian Exposition was wax cylinder recording. Benjamin Ives Gilman took his recording apparatus to the Midway Plaisance, a section of the fair populated by a variety of "native villages" from around the world, and captured for posterity the sounds of a variety of musicians from distant places, including the Parakansalak gamelan group. Gilman's scratchy recordings belong to the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology and provide a tantalizing inkling of how nineteenth-century gamelan sounded.



*Figure 3.6. Parakansalak gamelan and dancers at the 1893 World Columbian Exposition in Chicago (Bancroft, Hubert Howe. 1893. The Book of the Fair, p. 847. Chicago: The Bancroft Co.)*

The Chicago group consisted mostly of plantation workers from Parakansalak (the trip to Chicago was a reward for faithful service), but included some Central Javanese musicians and dancers as well. The combined group performed both Central Javanese and Sundanese music on the Parakansalak instruments. It is clear from listening to the nineteenth-century wax cylinder recordings that even though the Sundanese musicians may have been using instruments essentially identical to their Central Javanese counterparts, they had long since developed their own styles of playing these instruments, along with uniquely Sundanese repertoires; there is great contrast between the Javanese and Sundanese sections of the cylinders (Spiller 1996).

The specific instrumentation of Sumedang's heirloom gamelan varies quite a bit from set to set; while some of these gamelan are still playable, for most of the performances and classes held at the museum the musicians play a twentieth-century Sundanese gamelan named Sekar Manis ("Sweet Flower"). This not only prevents wear-and-tear on the heirloom sets, but the modern gamelan provides instruments that are more familiar and better suited to contemporary gamelan styles.





*Figure 3.7. Saron stands carved in the shape of a two-headed lion from the gamelan Sari Oneng Parakansalak in the Prabu Geusan Ulun Museum in Sumedang (Henry Spiller)*

### *Sundanese Gamelan Tuning*

Following Central Javanese models, nineteenth- and twentieth-century Sundanese gamelan could be tuned to one of two distinct tuning systems: *salendro* (the Sundanese language version of the Javanese word *slendro*) and *pelog*. Sundanese *salendro* and *pelog* are for most intents and purposes identical to their Javanese counterparts. As discussed in Chapter Two, *salendro* is a five-pitch equidistant tuning system; that is, the intervals between the five *salendro* pitches are approximately the same size (1200 cents divided by 5 equals 240 cents). *Pelog*, on the other hand, is a seven-pitch non-equidistant tuning system; i.e., the intervals between the seven *pelog* pitches vary in size from very small (about 90 cents) to very large (more than 400 cents).

Although there was considerable overlap in repertory and playing style, Sundanese *gamelan salendro* and *gamelan pelog*, as they were known, once represented distinct musical genres; each had its own functions and contexts. Gamelan *pelog* was appropriate for *wayang*



(puppet theater), while gamelan salendro was appropriate for *tayuban* (aristocratic men's dance) and *kliningan* (listening music featuring female singers). Historical documents from various kabupaten sometimes provide separate lists of the kabupaten's salendro compositions and pelog compositions. Although double gamelan, which include both pelog and salendro instruments, are common in Central Java, Sundanese double gamelan are rare.

Outside of aristocratic circles, acquiring even one set of instruments was a formidable undertaking because of their enormous cost; those who managed to do so had to choose between salendro and pelog. Because most of those non-aristocrats looking to own gamelan were *dalang* (puppeteers), who needed the instruments for their work, pelog was a popular choice. After Indonesian independence in 1949, however, audiences began to demand that female singers appear with gamelan, even gamelan for wayang. Female singers (called *pasinden*) preferred gamelan salendro, and gamelan pelog fell out of fashion (some musicians even retuned their pelog instruments to salendro). In the ensuing years, most musicians forgot the pelog repertory and many of the specific style characteristics associated with gamelan pelog.

A key reason that female singers preferred salendro over pelog was that salendro provided them much more flexibility to sing songs in a variety of other Sundanese tuning systems, each of which sets a different mood. These alternate tuning systems, like salendro, basically are pentatonic, and two or three of the pitches in the alternate system actually coincide with the gamelan's salendro pitches (Sundanese musicians call these common pitches *tumbuk*). But the remaining pitches are quite different from their salendro counterparts. By adjusting just a couple of salendro's pitches, the character of all the melodic intervals changes—instead of all equidistant intervals, which make each melodic step sound the same as the others, the alternate systems feature very large and very small intervals in addition to the medium-sized salendro intervals. When performing with a salendro gamelan, a singer can choose from three basic scales: salendro, *sorog* (also called *madenda*), and *pelog degung* (also call *kobongan* or *mataraman*). Figure 3.8 is a representation of the intervallic structures of salendro, sorog, and pelog degung and the relative position of small, medium, and large intervals in each.

Some musicians call these alternate tuning systems, and the practice of using them, *surupan*. Ethnomusicologist Max Harrell characterized

salendro	1	M	2	M	3	M	4	M	5	M	1
sorog	1	S	2	L	3	S	4	M	5	L	1
pelog degung	1	S	2	L	3	M	4	S	5	L	1

Figure 3.8. Intervals of *salendro*, *sorog*, and *pelog degung*

sorog and pelog degung as “quasi-pelog” scales because, like pelog, they are characterized by large and small intervals (Harrell 1975:89). They are, however, five-tone scales, not seven-tone scales like pelog. Furthermore, sorog and pelog degung, unlike pelog, include one characteristically salendro interval—that is, an interval that is approximately 240 cents.

Nowadays, gamelan pelog and gamelan salendro represent a unified musical genre, which some people call *gamelan salendro/pelog* (Supandi 1970:21; Natapradja 1972:63; Soepandi and Atmadibrata 1976:65; Heins 1977:54), but others call simply gamelan. Recent experiments with instruments that provide the capability to play both salendro and pelog pitches, and which can be played in a variety of the alternate tuning systems as well, reinforce the notion that Sundanese musicians conceive of a single, overarching gamelan “style” that is appropriate for accompanying dance, wayang and other theatrical productions, and listening music featuring female singers.

### *Musical Terminology*

Sundanese musical terminology and musical notation is a labyrinth of confusion and contradiction; the following discussion is most definitely not for the faint of heart! Sundanese musicians name the five pitches of the salendro scale, from high to low, *barang* (or *tugu*), *kenong* (or *lorloran/loloran*), *panelu*, *bem* (or *galimer* or *gulu*), and *singgul*. Sundanese musicians sometimes assign numbers to the five pitches of the salendro scale. In direct contrast to the Central Javanese system of numbering pitches described in Chapter Two, in which the number 1 is assigned to the lowest pitch in the scale, Sundanese musicians assign the number 1 to the highest pitch in the scale. Of course, the numbers are repeated in each octave; the note above 1 is 5. Sundanese musicians also sometimes use a syllable system, comparable to the Western “do-re-mi” solfège system, to describe the pitches of a scale; this system

**Table 3.1 Salendro and Pelog Naming and Numbering Systems**

Sundanese Salendro Pitch Name	Sundanese Pelog Pitch Name	Sundanese Damina Syllable	Sundanese Number	Javanese Number (see chapter two)
–	sorog	(leu)	5+	7
barang	barang	da	1	6
kenong	kenong	mi	2	5
–	liwung/bungur	(ni)	3-	4
panelu	panelu	na	3	3
bem/galimer	bem/galimer	ti	4	2
singgul	singgul	la	5	1

is called *damina* after the first three of its five syllables (da, mi, na, ti, and la). The damina system is moveable in the sense that any pitch can be designated as “da,” and the rest of the syllables follow suit; the syllables are assigned to pitches from high to low.

As if salendro were not confusing enough, pelog is a little more complicated. The names of five of the seven pelog pitches are the same as the salendro names. Pelog has two additional pitches: one, called *bungur* or *liwung*, lies between *kenong* (2) and *panelu* (3); the other, called *sorog* or *petit*, lies between *barang* (1) and the *singgul* (5) in the next octave above it. As was the case with Central Javanese gamelan, Sundanese pelog pieces tend to emphasize five-pitch subsets of the seven pelog pitches, so it makes sense that the five pitches with names in common between salendro and pelog would keep the same numbers. Bungur, because it is “less than 3” (that is, between 2 and 3), is notated as 3- (even though it is higher in pitch than panelu). Similarly, petit, because it is “more than 5,” is designated as 5+ (even though it is lower in pitch than singgul). These various naming systems are summarized in Table 3.1; note that pitches go from top to bottom in the table, in accordance with the way Sundanese musicians conceptualize their scales. Musicians use similar systems to describe the pitches in the various *surupan* as well.

Assigning damina syllables to pelog scales involves determining which five-pitch subset is in use, which of those five pitches should be “da,” and working from there. Sundanese theorists recognize three

**Table 3.2 Salendro and Pelog Naming and Numbering Systems**

Sundanese pelog pitch name	“damina” for pelog jawar	“damina” for pelog liwung	“damina” for pelog sorog	Sundanese number	Javanese number
sorog	(leu)	(ni)	na	5+	7
barang	da	na	ti	1	6
kenong	mi	ti	la	2	5
bungur	(ni)	la	(leu)	3-	4
panelu	na		da	3	3
bem	ti	da	mi	4	2
singgul	la	mi	(ni)	5	1

named subsets of pelog: *pelog jawar* (barang, kenong, panelu, bem, singgul); *pelog liwung* (barang, kenong, bungur, bem, singgul); and *pelog sorog* (barang, kenong, panelu, bem, sorog). For pelog jawar, barang is “da”; for pelog liwung, bem is “da”; for pelog sorog, panelu is “da” (see Table 3.2).

If all of these systems of pitches, scales, subsets, names, and numbers seem hopelessly confusing, that is because they are in fact hopelessly confusing. There is little standardization among Sundanese musicians and theorists regarding concepts of tuning system and scale, pitch names, or notational systems. Some, but certainly not all, of the alternate pitch names have already been mentioned. To some musicians, the word *laras* means tuning system, as in “laras salendro” or “laras pelog”; but it might also refer to the various five-pitch subsets of pelog, such as “laras pelog sorog.” Others will use the term *surupan* to refer to those pelog subsets, confounding those who use *surupan* to describe the alternate tuning systems that can be combined with salendro. And some musicians, especially when working with pelog or the alternate scales sorog and pelog degung, will use a moveable numbering system in which the number “1” is always associated with “da”—throwing off those who regard the numbers as permanently associated with particular keys or gongs on their instruments.

Nevertheless, most musicians manage to communicate with one another—mostly by avoiding notation altogether. Musicians are generally familiar with the variety of terms in common usage, and can determine

from the context what their fellow musicians are talking about. In fact, some musicians take great delight in arguing endlessly about the exact meanings of particularly contentious terms. Perhaps the fluidity and ambiguity in terminology actually contributes to the rich flexibility of Sundanese musical practice. Certainly when they are playing together, Sundanese musicians rely on their ears to guide them. It is only when music is written down—when it is excised from the context in which it usually embedded, and cast in stone—that confusion might arise.

### *Learning to Play Gamelan*

For most musicians, playing gamelan music in West Java is not a very lucrative proposition. While it is true that some musical specialists, such as female singers and dalang (puppeteers), sometimes earn considerable fees for their services, and that there are some salaried civil service positions available for qualified performers, the majority of rank-and-file musicians earns only a pittance for their services. Even musicians who are “professional” musicians in the sense that they are always paid for their work almost always have to find some other sources of income.

Obviously, few are drawn to the performing arts because of the financial rewards; most people who become musicians do so because something compels them to do so. Sundanese people recognize three compelling forces that lead individuals to the arts: family lineage (*keturunan*), tendency or aptitude (*bakat*), and desire (*kemauan*). Those rare individuals with all three have almost no choice but to make performing the focus of their lives; it is quite possible, however, to become an excellent musician with just two; one even can become a competent musician with only one.

Family lineage puts budding artists in an environment in which they learn the nuts and bolts of music and other performing arts the same way they learn to speak—by osmosis, before they are even aware that they are learning anything. Musical activities in West Java are dominated by musical families, in which many family members are accomplished artists. It is not unusual to see the young children (even adopted children) of established performers do prodigious technical feats at a very young age. Such children often receive relatively formal instruction from their older relatives, which gives them quite an advantage over students from non-artistic families.

Undang Sumarna, who has taught thousands of American students the basics of Sundanese gamelan music during his long tenure teaching at the University of California at Santa Cruz, is an example of a musician from an artistic family. He learned how to play gamelan, as well as the intricate skills of drumming for dance, from his grandfather, Abah Kayat. Several of Kayat's brothers were accomplished musicians, and they all belonged to a troupe of musicians who staged dance performances (Spiller 1993). Not all of Undang's siblings became musicians, however; Kayat recognized in Undang an additional quality—a knack, or an aptitude, for memorizing the complex drum patterns that accompany dance movements and understanding how they fit into the musical structure. So Kayat singled Undang out for intensive instruction (at times, encouraging Undang to practice by inflicting mild corporal punishment). Undang's family connections also provided him with the visibility he needed to find employment as a drummer.

Burhan Sukarma, whose style of playing the *suling* (bamboo flute) set new standards of style and excellence in the 1970s and 1980s when he was a staff musician at the Bandung branch of Radio Republik Indonesia (RRI), and who has played for countless commercially-released recordings, is an accomplished musician who did not come from an artistic family. The main thing that compelled him to pursue music was an overwhelming desire, which led him to seek out and “hang around” accomplished musicians. By making himself welcome by doing favors and acting agreeable, he could observe and imitate their actions. He also collected cassette recordings of musicians whose playing he admired and tried to copy their performances during his private practice sessions. Unlike Undang, Burhan did not receive any musical training as a young child; he began his musical studies in his teens. By dint of his dedication and talent, however, the established musicians noticed his advancing skills and welcomed him into their ensembles.

Most people would agree that Burhan and Undang both came equipped with a special knack for musical performance; a compelling family background (in Undang's case) and an overwhelming desire (in Burhan's case) reinforced the knack and led them to master some of the more difficult instrumental skills. There is a place in Sundanese gamelan music, too, for people with only an overwhelming desire to play. Very often, such musicians are drawn to the social life that playing with a gamelan group entails; a working troupe travels together from place to place, enjoys considerable hospitality from their employers, and builds strong bonds of friendship with fellow troupe members

through constant close contact. Kathy Foley quotes a gamelan musician as saying “if you are a musician, you always have friends” (Foley 1980:85). The magical, lively, and glamorous world of gamelan performance provides a welcome respite from the daily grind of home and family.

It is possible to learn the basics of playing gamelan by sitting on stage with musicians during their performance; this is, in fact, the way that many musicians acquired their skills. Gamelan performances are rarely so formal that a few extra people on stage poses any problem. Musicians sometimes bring one of their children (or a neighbor’s child who has an interest) along for the ride, and expose the young one to the excitement of playing gamelan. Older individuals with the desire to learn can mill about in the background, ingratiating themselves to the musicians and getting a closeup view of the various instrumental parts and techniques. Eventually, a musician might leave the stage, creating an opportunity for a budding musician who is brave enough and knows the part well enough to try playing it. A mistake will result in mild, long-lasting, but good-natured derision from the musicians. The error will do little to mar the performance irreparably, but it’s not likely that the humiliated student will ever make the same mistake again.

Much gamelan “rehearsal” is actually accomplished during performances; what makes for good performances is the precision with which the musicians work together. Musicians do sometimes get together for practice sessions, called *latihan*, outside of performances. Sometimes a *latihan* is intended to prepare for a particular performance. More often, however, *latihan* are meant to provide an opportunity to learn or improve one’s skills; those who would like to learn more about playing music find *latihan* a useful exercise. The root word, *latih*, has the sense of “becoming accustomed to.” Only rarely do *latihan* participants stop and spot-rehearse something; rather, they play through pieces as if they were at a performance, and in doing so they become accustomed to performing. Sometimes, accomplished artists host a *latihan* for aspiring musicians who would like to learn from them; in such cases, the participants are expected to discretely pay their teacher.

Thus, in any gamelan group, there will be some master musicians, some merely competent players, and sometimes even rank beginners. The instrumentation, style, and structure of gamelan music facilitates

these multiple tiers of skill levels. Some of the instruments require vast stores of knowledge and great dexterity to play, while others are relatively simple. Prospective musicians begin with the easier instruments and progress to the more difficult ones as their family position, aptitude, and desire allow.

### *Gamelan Instrumentation*

In its most basic form, Sundanese gamelan includes nine performers who play instruments that are often quite similar to the Central Javanese gamelan instruments described in Chapter Two. The core Sundanese gamelan instruments are described below.

*Goong*—a large knobbed gong that is vertically suspended from a frame and struck with a thickly padded stick. The low-pitched, deep, undulating sound is not damped, and the specific pitch is unimportant.

*Kempul*—a knobbed gong that is smaller and has a higher pitch than goong. It is suspended from the same frame as goong, and it is struck with the same padded stick by the same musician. The performer usually damps the sound of kempul after it has been struck, usually with one hand which is inside the back of the instrument; this hand also prevents the instrument from swinging too much. As with goong, specific pitch is unimportant.

*Saron*—six- or seven-keyed metallophone, the keys of which are laid over a common trough resonator (occasionally individual but untuned resonators) hollowed out of a single block of wood. The musician strikes the keys, one at a time, with a light wooden hammer (*panakol*). The player damps the sound by pinching the vibrating key with his free hand. Sundanese gamelan usually include two saron.

*Panerus*—six- or seven-keyed metallophone, the keys of which are laid over a box resonator (that is, not hollowed out of a single block of wood, but rather a box made of boards). The playing technique is the same as that of saron. Panerus is tuned one octave lower than saron, has thinner, broader keys, and produces a softer, mellower sound.

*Bonang*—gong chime with ten small knobbed gongs supported horizontally in two rows on ropes stretched in a frame. The player uses two thinly padded sticks to play and damp the gongs. The lower octave is in the same range as panerus; the higher octave is in the saron range. The total range is two octaves.



*Gambang*—xylophone with 18 to 21 wooden keys placed over a box resonator. The musician plays with two padded disks attached to thin sticks. No damping technique is required. The range is approximately 3-1/2 to 4 octaves.

*Gendang*—set of two-headed, barrel-shaped drums.

*Rebab*—spike fiddle with two brass strings and a skin-covered resonator, played with a horsehair bow. Unlike the other gamelan instruments, which are a set and incompatible with instruments from other gamelan, all rebab are compatible with any gamelan. Sundanese rebab players generally bring their own instruments to performances. A modern rebab is made so that it can be dismantled and carried in a small briefcase. The rebab strings are tuned to the pitches *barang* and *bem*.

*Pasinden*—female vocalist. Although not really an “instrument,” per se, the *pasinden*’s vocal part is comparable in some ways to the other gamelan instruments’ parts. Some female vocalists prefer to be called *juru kawih*.

Other instruments can be added to this basic ensemble, provided the instruments themselves are available and additional performers beyond the core nine are there to play them. These optional instruments are described below.

*Kenong*—gong chime with one to six large, high-pitched knobbed gongs laid horizontally over ropes in a frame. The gongs are tuned to pitches in the gamelan’s tuning system.

*Jengglong*—gong chime with three to six gongs. *Jengglong* is similar to *kenong*, but the gongs are flatter and tuned an octave lower.

*Peking*—metallophone similar to *saron* but tuned an octave higher.

*Rincik*—gong chime similar to *bonang* but tuned an octave higher.

*Kecrek*—stack of iron plates which is hit with a wooden hammer to make a noisy, jangling sound.

*Ketuk*—small gong laid horizontally and hit with a padded stick.

Figure 3.9 shows musicians at the Kabupaten Bogor playing (from left to right) *gambang*, *gendang*, and *rebab* (the *bonang* and *goong* stand is visible in the rear). Figure 3.10 shows two *saron* and *panerus* (*kenong* are visible at the right). Figure 3.11 shows the Rawit Group from Soreang performing with a *pasinden*.

Although many of these instruments are quite similar to their Central Javanese counterparts, the names and construction details of some instruments are significantly different. Sundanese call the large gong *goong* (pronounced *go-on*g to suggest the instrument’s undulating



*Figure 3.9. (Gamelan salendro instruments, left to right) gambang (in back), gendang, rebab (bonang and gong stand visible in the back) (Henry Spiller)*



*Figure 3.10. (Gamelan salendro instruments, left to right) two saron, panerus, kenong (Henry Spiller)*

quality); a Sundanese goong is often polished to a bright sheen, in contrast to most Javanese gongs, which are left with the black patina they acquire in the forge. Sundanese kempul, in contrast, are often left black, while Javanese kempul are almost always shiny. The Sundanese rincik is for all intents and purposes the same as a Central Javanese bo-



Figure 3.11. *LS Rawit Group from Soreang, with pasinden Lia Mustika (Henry Spiller)*

nang panerus. The Sundanese word *rincik*, when applied to musical instruments, means high-pitched, but in other contexts it also has connotations of delicately falling rain or a creeping vine that intertwines itself with whatever supports it—appropriate metaphors for the fast, cascading figurations played on instruments called *rincik*. The Javanese impart similar implications to the word *panerus*, which comes from the root word *terus*, and suggests following along or accompanying something else (Soeharto 1992:110), and they also apply the term to the highest-pitched instrument in an instrument “family” (e.g., *saron panerus*, *bonang panerus*, *gender panerus*).

Some of the name and construction differences point to significant differences in musical aesthetics and playing styles between Sundanese and Javanese gamelan. In the Sundanese language, the word *panerus* has similar implications as it has in Javanese and Indonesian languages. The instrument that Sundanese call *panerus*, however, most closely resembles a Central Javanese *saron demung*—the lowest-pitched member of the *saron* family; in other words, it seems to have exactly the opposite implication that it carries for the Javanese. In Sundanese gamelan style, musicians typically play relatively fast-moving, decorated parts on this low-pitched *saron*-type instrument, in contrast to the relatively slow parts associated with the *saron demung* in Central Javanese gamelan style. Sundanese *panerus* tend to have thinner keys and a larger resonator box than their Javanese counterparts, and Sundanese musicians typically use a soft, sometime padded mallet to play the

panerus rather than the robust Javanese wooden hammer; as a result, the Sundanese panerus has a softer, more delicate sound than the Javanese equivalent. It appears that the Sundanese panerus is not so much a member of a “family” as it is an individual instrument with its own unique function in the ensemble.

Like Javanese, Sundanese prefer the sound of gamelan made of bronze (*perunggu*), but a considerably less expensive alternative is iron (*beusi*). Instrument stands (*ancak*) often feature elaborate carvings and bright paint (most often blue, green, blue-green, or red; brown, and natural finishes also are common) with gold highlights.

### *Musical Organization*

Sundanese gamelan music features the same four functional layers as the Cirebonese, Javanese, and Balinese gamelan music described in Chapter Two: (1) colotomic foundation; (2) simplified/abstracted melody, (3) elaborated/varied melody, and (4) drum patterns that shape the phrases, coordinate rhythmic activity, and synchronize the music with other activities such as dance. Once again, these four functions combine to create a stratified musical texture; in Sundanese gamelan style, however, the layers are not always as clearly articulated as they are in Central Javanese and Balinese music.

The four layers also chart a budding musician’s path to learning to play gamelan music. The colotomic layer is perhaps the easiest to learn because many different pieces share the same colotomic forms. Once students have mastered these formal basics by successfully playing the goong and kempul, they can move onto to learning the abstract, essential melodies for various pieces by playing the kenong. Most students advance to playing instruments such as saron, panerus, and bonang, which require mastering some elaboration techniques. Only a few musicians progress beyond these instruments to learn to play rebab and gendang.

Instruments that have a primarily colotomic function include goong, kempul, kenong, jengglong, and ketuk. Melodic Sundanese gamelan instruments can be divided into two categories: (1) percussion instruments with fixed pitches (that is, each key or pot is tuned permanently to a single pitch that cannot be altered during performance) and small ranges, and (2) non-percussion instruments with no

fixed pitches (that is, the instrument can produce a multitude of pitches) and large ranges. These can be referred to as “fixed” and “free” instruments, respectively. The fixed instruments are percussion instruments, and they are limited to pitches in the salendro tuning system. As percussion instruments, their sound, once started, can be stopped (damped) but not sustained. The fixed instrument category includes kenong, saron, panerus, peking, bonang, and rincik. The free instruments are rebab (spike fiddle) and the singers. The singers and the rebab player delight in producing minute variations in pitch and timbre and taking advantage of the control they have over the duration and volume of their sounds.

The *gambang* (wooden xylophone) is somewhere between a fixed and free instrument. While it is a percussion instrument, its sound can be sustained (in a manner of speaking) with a tremolo technique in which the player rapidly repeats a note to suggest a sustained tone. The *gambang*’s range—almost four octaves—is much wider than the other fixed instruments. Unlike the rebab and pasinden, however, with gamelan salendro it is limited to the salendro tuning system. The four layers are completed by the *gendang* (drums) player who, of course, provides the drumming element.

#### *Colotomic Layer*

Sundanese colotomic parts are like Central Javanese colotomic parts in that a long cycle marked by a gong stroke is divided into increasingly shorter units by strokes on instruments with distinctive timbres. In theory, kenong strokes divide the gong phrases into smaller sections. In practice, however, the instrument kenong is not always included in the gamelan ensemble; nevertheless, listeners “hear” the implication of kenong strokes, even if the instrument itself is not audible.

Again in theory, a kempul stroke marks the midpoint of phrases marked with kenong strokes. In practice, Sundanese kempul parts are rarely so simple. Kempul players consistently add an extra kempul stroke or two just before striking the goong. Occasionally the kempul player performs a more complicated pattern of strokes or leaves out a few strokes (cf. Foley 1980:56).

Theoretical ketuk strokes come halfway between (theoretical) kenong and (theoretical) kempul strokes. In practice, a ketuk is rarely played at all, or even present; the bonang often (but not always) plays the ketuk’s colotomic rhythm. The absence of kenong and ketuk in

many gamelan, the melodic as well as rhythmic role of kenong in current practice (see below), and the liberties players take with kempul parts minimize the roles of these instruments as colotomic markers in Sundanese gamelan style. In Sundanese gamelan music, the colotomic functional layer is always implicit but rarely explicit; either the instruments that would play them are absent, or else the basic colotomic parts are embellished beyond their role as regular time markers.

The goong strokes, however, are an important aural marker for Sundanese musicians and listeners. Perhaps the most glaring mistake a musician can make is forgetting to play the goong, or playing it at the wrong moment. A misplaced goong stroke will inspire visible discomfort in the other musicians. One musician sees the “meaning” of gamelan music as the working together of the various musicians toward a common goal, namely the stroke of the goong. He sees the goong stroke as the payoff, the reward for working hard and cooperating. The goong stroke is *enak*—“delicious” (Otong Rasta, pers. comm., 6/19/99). Kathy Foley reports that “players say that the sounding of the deep-toned goong is as necessary and inevitable as death is to life” (Foley 1980:55).

### *Core Melody*

Sundanese musicians “encode” gamelan pieces in their memories as abstract melodic outlines that capture the essential, identifying features of a piece without instrument-specific features. Many Sundanese gamelan pieces are conceptualized as a simple sequence of pitches called *pola lagu* (“pattern for a piece/song”), *tugu lagu* (“piece/song pillar[s]”) (Soepandi 1985:166), or *arkuh lagu* (“song skeleton/frame”). These terms suggest that the sequence of pitches provides a pattern or an outline for the musicians to follow—a framework for them to fill in. The individual pitches in the sequence, which musicians sometimes call *pokok*, *posisi kenong*, or *kenong*, act as musical “pillars” that provide a sturdy framework on which the musicians can hang their individual parts. In its most essential form, a piece’s essential pattern may consist of as few as two “pillar” pitches.

To perform the pieces, musicians flesh out the pillar pitches with instrument-specific melodic motifs—a process some musicologists call *realization*. Sundanese realization techniques differ from musician to musician, family to family, and group to group. One performance of a piece can sound very different from another performance; neverthe-

less, Sundanese listeners recognize the particular pattern of pillar pitches and know which piece they are hearing. The most common pieces of this sort are known collectively as *patokan*. In the Sundanese language, the root word of *patokan* (*patok*) has to do with boundary markers, again suggesting that the pieces provide an outline for the musicians. The individual pitches quite literally show the musicians the “boundaries” of the piece as they navigate their way through the music.

In performance, a piece’s pillar pitches occur at regular time intervals; the time interval between pillar pitches may be quite short or rather long depending on the circumstances of the performance. To generate a part, an instrumentalist chooses from a personal repertory of motifs that rhythmically and melodically lead to and coincide with the appropriate pillar pitch at the appropriate time.

### *Elaboration*

In Central Javanese gamelan, an entire group of instrumentalists (on the various sizes of keyed instruments in the saron family) play the *balungan* (“skeleton”)—a part that many regard to be the core melody—while other musicians elaborate the core melody. In Sundanese gamelan, the parts played on *all* the melodic gamelan instruments (with the possible exception of the *kenong*) involve some kind of elaboration upon the piece’s core melody. Core melody is an especially abstract concept in Sundanese music, but it represents the mental boundary markers that keep all the musicians playing together.

The piece “Sinyur” (heard on Tracks 7 and 8 of the CD that accompanies this book), for example, consists of four essential pillar pitches. Two of the four pillar pitches are goong tones, meaning that they coincide with strokes of the large goong; these are indicated with circles in the following notation.

1 ④ 1 ③

In performance, these pillar pitches are evenly spaced in time, and the cycle of pillar pitches is repeated for as long as the piece needs to be played. The musicians fill in the spaces between them with instrument-specific melodic motifs. Perhaps a better way to graphically illustrate a piece’s pattern is by arranging the pillar tones in a circle, as in Figure 3.12. The gray circle represents the musical time that the musicians fill with their instrument-specific realizations. To begin the piece,

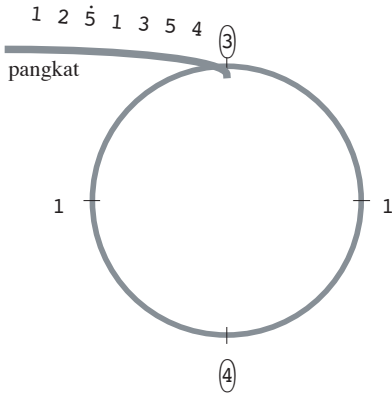


Figure 3.12. “Sinyur”: *pangkat* and pillar pitches

one musician (typically the saron player) plays a short introductory melodic phrase, called a *pangkat*, that leads to one of the pillar pitches marked by a goong stroke. The introductory phrase notated in the figure is the one that the saron I player provides at the beginning of “Sinyur” as performed by LS Giri Harja III (Track 7 on the accompanying CD, from 0:00 to 0:06). Once started, the piece proceeds clockwise around the circle until a drum signal indicates that it is time to end; the musicians draw the rendition to a close at a goong stroke, so that the sound of the goong is the last thing people hear.

Often the first step in realizing a *patokan* piece involves somehow increasing the number of pillar pitches in each gong phrase to four or more. Musicians can derive the extra pitches in several ways. One way is to simply repeat the preceding pillar pitch (see Figure 3.13).

Another way is to add a *pancer* pitch between each of the essential pillar pitches. In Sundanese, the word *pancer* means “middle point” or

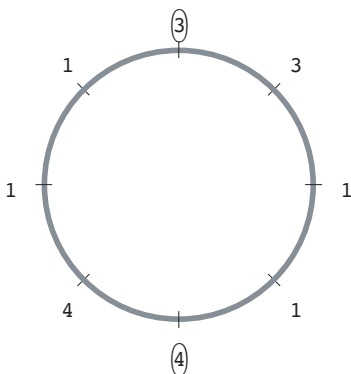


Figure 3.13. “Sinyur”: deriving additional pillar pitches



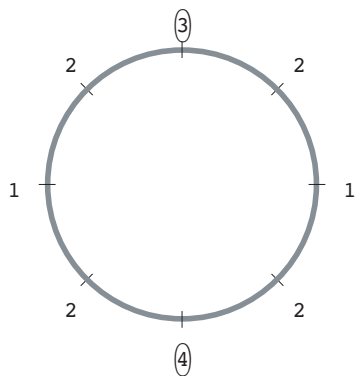


Figure 3.14. “Sinyur”: deriving additional pillar pitches with a pancer

“center”; as a musical term, it suggests choosing a consistent pitch to insert halfway between existing pitches. In choosing a pancer for a piece, musicians avoid using any of the pitches already in use; in the case of “Sinyur,” the pitches 1, 3, and 4 are already in use, so the choices for pancer are 2 and 5 (see Figure 3.14).

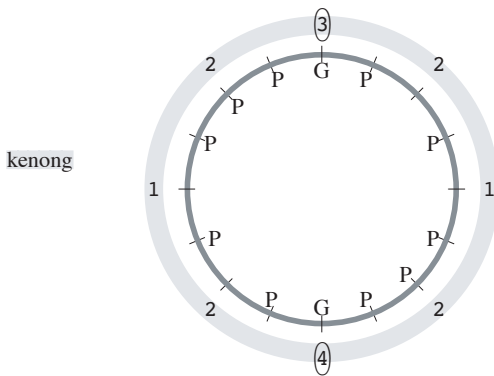
This expanded outline—the pillar pitches plus a pancer—is an appropriate part for a kenong player to play. In most modern gamelan, the instrument kenong (if present) includes gongs tuned to each pitch in the tuning system. The pitches played by the kenong player often are the pillar pitches of the piece’s outline. Perhaps this is why many Sundanese musicians refer to the pillar pitches themselves as “kenong” regardless of whether the instrument kenong is included or played in the ensemble. The part played on the kenong is perhaps the most complete version of the essential melody of any of the parts.

The LS Giri Harja III musicians chose pitch 2 as their pancer for the performance recorded in Track 7 of the accompanying CD; for the first two full iterations of the cycle of “Sinyur,” the kenong player’s performance of the pillar pitches as notated in the figure is clearly audible. Table 3.3 maps the CD timings to the kenong strokes on the recording. Note that the tempo speeds up considerably in the second phrase of the first iteration, only to slow down again at the beginning of the second iteration.

The goong player (who also plays the kempul) subdivides each kenong phrase in half with a kempul stroke. It is customary to add an extra kempul stroke before the goong, usually as notated in Figure 3.15. This basic goong/kempul pattern represents an extremely common colotomic form in Sundanese music.

**Table 3.3 Timings for Pillar Pitches in “Sinyur”**

<b>Pangkat, first goong</b>	(pangkat)			<b>(3)</b>
CD timing				0:05
<b>First repetition</b>				
pillar pitches	2	1	2	<b>(4)</b>
CD timing	0:08	0:11	0:15	0:17
pillar pitches	2	1	2	<b>(3)</b>
CD timing	0:19	0:21	0:23	0:26
<b>Second repetition</b>				
pillar pitches	2	1	2	<b>(4)</b>
CD timing	0:29	0:33	0:36	0:40
pillar pitches	2	1	2	<b>(3)</b>
CD timing	0:44	0:48	0:51	0:54



*Figure 3.15. “Sinyur”: goong and kempul parts*

The most basic part that a bonang player in a Sundanese gamelan could provide would duplicate the colotomic rhythm that a ketuk player would provide—that is, subdividing the time segment between kenong and kempul strokes. Because the bonang also is an elaborating instrument, the bonang part has a melodic role as well; it anticipates the upcoming pillar pitch by sounding it in the ketuk rhythm (see Figure 3.16).

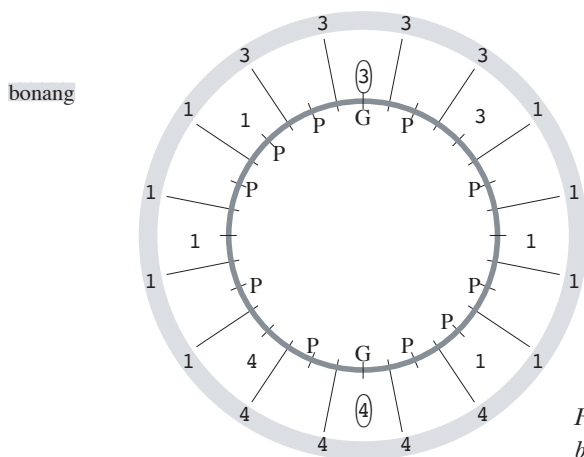


Figure 3.16. “Sinyur”:  
bonang part

Because the kenong player is “filling in” the extra pillar position with a pancer, however, there is a delicious clash between the pitch that the bonang part anticipates and the pitch the kenong actually plays; these clashes are resolved by the time the original pillar pitches come around, however (see Figure 3.17).

The two saron in a Sundanese gamelan are identical, but they rarely play the same part. The lead saron player (saron I) can choose from a variety of realization styles to come up with a part. The saron II player usually constructs a part whose notes fall between the saron I part’s notes both rhythmically and pitchwise so that the two parts interlock; Sundanese musicians call these interlocking figurations *caruk*.

The players of the other “fixed” instruments, namely panerus, peking, and rincik, follow similar procedures to create their parts. Each instrument has its own idiom, which predicts how slow or fast its part should proceed and what kinds of melodic twists and turns it should take. The musicians have quite a bit of latitude within these idioms; the only truly hard and fast rule is that all the instrument parts come together at the pillar pitches. In between the pillar pitches, they weave a rich fabric of pitches, melodies, timbres, and textures. In addition, there are a variety of realization styles for each instrument, which in different combinations allow for almost limitless moods to emerge from the ensemble. The two saron might choose to play lightning-fast, delicate interlocking motifs to provide an appropriate accompaniment for a singer. The saron players might switch to a less florid style to ac-

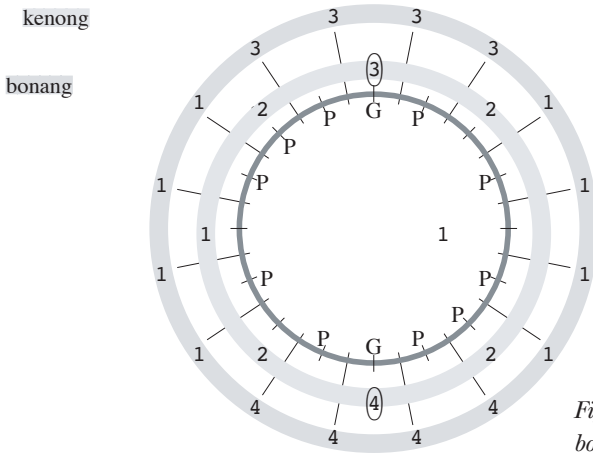


Figure 3.17. “Sinyur”:  
bonang part with *pancer*

company quick-moving action in a dance or puppet show. In such a situation, the bonang can play aggressive melodic figurations to enhance the new mood. LS Giri Harja III’s performance of *Sinyur* (Track 7 of the CD that accompanies this book) includes many such realization style changes as the ensemble first accompanies a puppet’s aggressive and energetic dance (the first three minutes of the recording) and then, without stopping, continues on to accompany some narration (at 2:55), followed by a lyrical solo sung by the *pasinden* (at 3:43).

“Fixed” instrument parts generally move along in strict rhythm; regardless of whether a fixed instrument part moves quickly or slowly, it is usually quite even and consistent. The idioms of the *rebab* player and the singers are “free” in the sense that their rhythm can be quite elastic compared to the other gamelan instruments. They often arrive at pillar pitches slightly before or after the fixed instrument parts. The free parts include long-held notes as well as quick-moving melodic fragments. Singers and *rebab* players also deploy an arsenal of ornaments, such as trills, slides, and vibratos, to further elaborate their already florid parts.

When performing with gamelan *salendro*, *rebab* players and singers often further enhance the contrast between their free parts and the fixed instrument idioms by using a different tuning system (sometimes called *surupan*) than the fixed instruments. Alternate tuning systems, such as *sorog* and *pelog degung*, are “superimposed” over the gamelan’s tuning system so that there are two or three pitches in common

with the fixed instruments' salendro tuning. The contrast between the rhythmic and melodic characteristics of fixed and free instrument idioms is a major part of Sundanese musical aesthetics.

The alternate tuning systems that rebab players and singers superimpose over salendro are differentiated by the intervals between their five principal pitches. While there are subtle differences between the intervals, they all can be characterized as small, medium, or large. Salendro includes only medium intervals. Both sorog and pelog degung have two small intervals, two large intervals, and one medium interval (refer back to Figure 3.8 to see these tuning systems compared).

Perhaps the simplest way to conceptualize how these alternate tuning systems can be combined with salendro is to examine how a rebab player produces the various alternate tunings on his instrument. Although the rebab has two strings, most of the notes are played on only one of them; this string is tuned to the pitch barang (i.e., pitch 1). A rebab player stops the string with his forefinger (f), middle finger (m), ring finger (r), and pinkie (p) to produce the various pitches on the rebab (see Figure 3.18). Most typically, the performer keeps his hand in one of three positions along the neck of the rebab at any given time. Between the four fingers and three hand positions, it is possible to produce notes over a range of approximately two octaves.

To play in salendro, the rebab player positions his hand in such a way that his four fingers touch the strings so that the distance between each finger is approximately the same (in reality, because of the physics of vibrating strings, each distance is slightly different; conceptually, however, the distances between the fingers are the same). Figure 3.19 illustrates where each finger must touch the string in each of



*Figure 3.18. Otong Rasta playing rebab; his left hand shows the sorog hand position (Henry Spiller)*

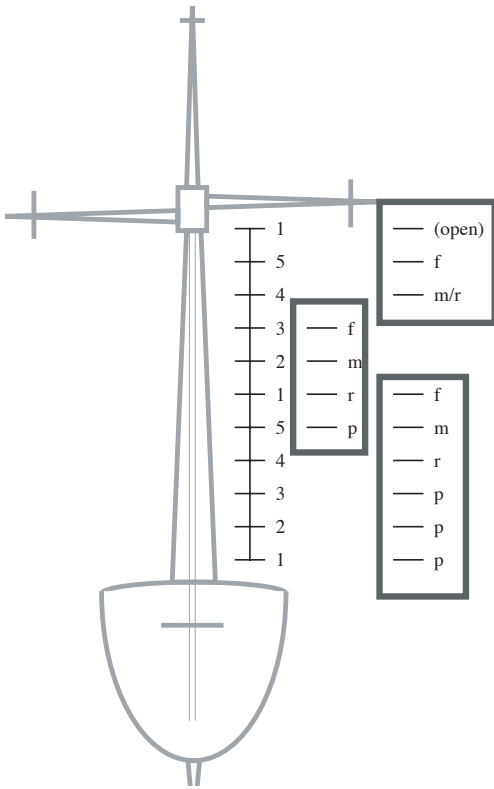


Figure 3.19. *Rebab fingerings for salendro*

the three hand positions to produce a salendro pitch. The hand positions overlap to a certain extent; some pitches can be played in more than one hand position. The three highest salendro pitches are played by sliding the pinkie up and down from the highest position.

Unlike salendro, which features only medium-sized intervals, the other surupan include mostly large and small intervals. To play a small interval, the rebab player can squeeze any two adjacent fingers very close to each other. Large intervals are more problematic; because of the anatomy of the human hand, it is difficult to separate the middle and ring fingers far enough to produce a large

interval. It is quite easy, however, to stretch the pinkie out to reach a large interval, and not impossible to place a large interval between the forefinger and middle finger. Sorog fingerings, therefore, feature hand positions that place the large intervals between the ring finger and pinkie or between the forefinger and middle finger, as illustrated in Figure 3.20.

In fact, in the minds of many rebab players, sorog is characterized primarily by a particular hand position in which there is a medium interval between the fore- and middle fingers, a small interval between the middle and ring fingers, and a large interval between the ring finger and pinkie. In Figure 3.20, this characteristically sorog hand position was the middle hand position. By moving this characteristic hand position to other places on the string, a rebab player can produce

other sorog scales, with different pitches in common with salendro. Because the small, medium, and large intervals follow a different pattern in pelog degung, rebab players use different hand positions for these surupan as well, as illustrated in Figure 3.21.

When playing in sorog or pelog degung, some of the rebab's pitches are the same as the gamelan's salendro pitches, and some of them are not; there are, however, always at least two, and often three, pitches in common (*tumbuk*) between salendro and sorog. Rebab players choose a surupan in which the gamelan piece's pillar tones match up with the surupan's common pitches.

The pillar pitches for "Sinyur," for example, are 4, 3, and 1; whatever surupan the rebab player chooses must include the salendro pitches 4, 3, and 1 so that the rebab part will match up with the gamelan at the pillar pitches. In Track 7 on the CD that accompanies this book, the pasinden and rebab player perform almost exclusively in sorog, creating considerable dissonance at times, but they always return to the pillar pitches at the appropriate times.

At least one female singer, called a pasinden, performs with the gamelan; if there are more than one pasinden, they take turns. The male instrumentalists sometimes sing as well, and it is increasingly common to include a male soloist, called *wiraswara* or *juru alok*, whose only job is to sing. He typically fills in the musical spaces left by the pasinden, or responds to her vocal lines. Pasinden and wiraswara often set stock phrases or poems to the melodies they sing. While performing, pasinden often consult a small notebook with texts written in it. Some of the melodies

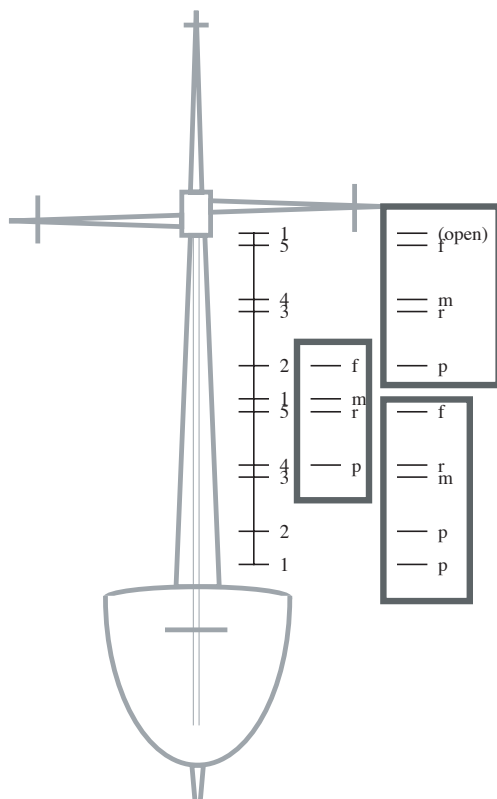


Figure 3.20. Rebab fingerings for sorog

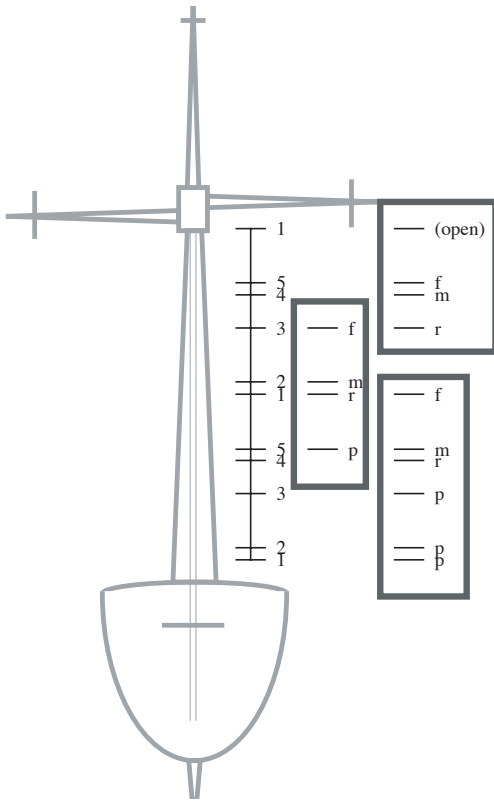


Figure 3.21. *Rebab fingerings for pelog degung*

they sing have particular texts associated with them, but in many cases they select words that somehow relate to or enhance the situation at hand.

Pasinden do not sing constantly; there is ample opportunity to breathe between phrases. Rebab players, however, do play almost constantly and fill in the gaps where the singers breathe or rest for a while. When rebab and pasinden are performing simultaneously, they perform in the same tuning system, and make an effort to choose similar figurations; the result is a texture of simultaneous variation.

The use of alternate tuning systems, the pitches of which may be dissonant with the rest of the gamelan,

by rebab player and singers, as well as their elastic rhythm and florid idioms, help them to stand out in the texture of gamelan. These clashes are part of the aesthetic appeal of Sundanese gamelan music. The clashes that characterize Sundanese gamelan music are comparable to the combination in Central Java of loud and soft styles; however, Sundanese exaggerate the contrast between free and fixed idioms far beyond those of Central Javanese loud and soft styles.

### ***Musical Forms***

Chapter Two briefly outlined some forms for Central Javanese gamelan music; these were differentiated by the different ways in which the colotomic parts interlock, among other characteristics. While there is



great disagreement among Sundanese musicians about how to classify formal structures in Sundanese gamelan music, there are two broad categories upon which most people agree: (1) *lagu alit* (“small pieces”), also called *lagu leutik*, *sekar alit*, *rancagan*, or *rerenggongan*, and (2) *lagu gede* (“great pieces”), also called *sekar ageung*. Some people use a third category, *lagu tengahan* (“middle pieces”), for pieces that do not fit conveniently into the other categories.

In their most basic form, lagu alit have positions for four pillar pitches. If the goong phrase has fewer than four identifying pitches, additional pillar pitches may be derived through techniques such as adding a pancer. “Sinyur” is an example of a lagu alit.

In performance, musicians often expand (or contract) the time interval between pillar pitches in lagu alit. The terms *sawilet*, *dua wilet*, *opat wilet*, *dalapan wilet*, and *kering* refer to such expansions. Musicians can determine which wilet treatment to use by listening to the drummer, who will play particular drum patterns to indicate how much musical time there is to fill before the next pillar pitch. The basic treatment of lagu alit is called sawilet (“one wilet”); upon hearing sawilet drumming, for example, the saron I player knows that he has plenty of time to play a four-note pattern for each pillar pitch. He may also decide to play eight-note patterns, but he will be aware that these patterns will be very fast. The term “wilet” refers to levels of musical time between pillar pitches.

A different drum pattern would cue the musicians to play the lagu alit in dua wilet (“two wilet”); the musical space between the pillar pitches is approximately twice as long as it is in sawilet. The saron player knows that he has plenty of time to play eight-note patterns for each pillar pitch (of course, he could decide to play very fast sixteen-note patterns as well). In dua wilet, the kenong player might decide to play more notes by adding an additional pancer. The same expansion processes apply to opat wilet (“four wilet”). Dalapan wilet (“eight wilet”) is a possibility as well. Kering literally means “dry” but refers to a much faster treatment of the piece. Sundanese musicians sometimes call kering *satengah wilet* (“half wilet”).

In LS Giri Harja III’s performance of “Sinyur” in Track 7 of the CD that accompanies this book, the drummer gives a cue after the goong stroke at 3:16 that tells the musicians to switch to four wilet at the next goong stroke. The musicians immediately begin to slow down to put more time between the pillar pitches; by the next gong stroke at 3:34, they are playing in four wilet, and the kenong player begins to add ex-

tra pancer pitches to stretch out the phrases. The next goong stroke is a full forty seconds later, at 4:14; up to this point, the goong strokes had been about ten to fifteen seconds apart.

No matter what the wilet treatment, the average pulse or melodic density of each instrument's part remains more or less consistent—a musician produces notes at about the same pace regardless of wilet. It is the number of notes between each pillar pitch that changes, not the tempo of the melodic parts. To effect a transition from one wilet treatment to another, as the drummer slows down (or speeds up) the pulse to signal a new wilet treatment, an instrumentalist slows (or quickens) his pace until it becomes unidiomatically slow (or fast); at that point, he changes abruptly to the new density, which likely will be a bit fast (or slow) for a moment, until the drummer settles completely into the new rhythm. Within each wilet treatment, the drummer can indicate to the musicians to go faster or slower, however.

In many cases, musicians give a different name to a lagu alit when it is played in four wilet. The different name usually refers to a song, played by rebab and pasinden, that is superimposed over the lagu alit in four wilet. The song “Golewang,” for example, goes with a four-wilet version of “Sinyur.” If the rebab player and pasinden perform “Golewang,” the four-wilet version of “Sinyur” that accompanies it is called “Golewang” as well. A lagu alit also can be treated in four wilet without superimposing a song over it, in which case the rebab player and pasinden improvise (as LS Giri Harja III musicians do for “Sinyur” in Track 7 of the accompanying CD). Songs also can be superimposed over lagu alit in other wilet treatments as well; the lagu alit retains its essential identifying features, such as number of goong phrases in the cycle and identifying pillar pitches.

Not all gamelan pieces are defined solely by a simple succession of pitches. There also is a repertory of longer pieces with set melodies, of which all the musicians play simultaneous variations. Lagu gede or sekar ageung are such pieces with very long goong phrases. As always, the colotomic instruments mark a metric foundation for the piece.

### *Gamelan Style*

The style of Sundanese gamelan salendro (and other Sundanese music) is characterized by the layered presentation of contrasting elements. In addition to the four functional layers that characterize Ja-

vanese and Balinese gamelan music in general, Sundanese musicians delight in layering tuning systems (sorog or pelog melodies with salendro accompaniment), approaches to rhythm (the regular rhythm of the fixed gamelan instruments with the freer rhythm of the rebab and pasinden parts), and even different pieces. The tension between these contrasting elements, as well as the resolution of that tension when the elements converge at pillar pitches and the strokes of the goong, are important factors in Sundanese aesthetic appreciation.

### **Music of Sundanese Aristocrats: *Degung***

The Sundanese gamelan described so far are quite similar to gamelan from Central Java. The gamelan ensemble called *degung*, on the other hand, is uniquely Sundanese in appearance, sound, and style. In modern West Java, one is likely to encounter a *degung* ensemble at a wedding or any other social celebration, at civic and private receptions of all sorts, and even in hotel lobbies—anywhere an atmosphere of elegance and Sundaneseness is desired. *Degung*'s elegant connotations derive from its origins as the gamelan ensemble of the Sundanese aristocracy; since Indonesian independence, however, Sundanese musicians have found ways to adapt *degung* to play pop music as well as the austere *klasik* (classical) aristocratic pieces. These musical developments contribute to *degung*'s increasingly democratic and egalitarian status even as it retains an aura of "class."

The word *degung* apparently is an old Sundanese term for referring to gongs and gong ensembles. It is similar in this sense to the Balinese use of the word *gong* to refer to ensembles that include large hanging gongs (cf. Soepandi and Atmadibrata 1976:64). In this sense, the words *degung* and *gong* are essentially synonyms for the word *gamelan*. In the twentieth century, however, the term *gamelan* has come to refer to all gamelan-like ensembles throughout Indonesia. It is not uncommon to hear *degung* referred to as *gamelan degung*, even though such usage is, strictly speaking, redundant. Since the term *degung* has also come to refer to the particular tuning system of the ensemble, however, the term *gamelan degung* also can be interpreted to mean "a gamelan ensemble tuned to *degung*."

Max Harrell characterized the *degung* ensemble's scale as a "quasi-pelog" scale because, like *pelog*, it is characterized by large and small

**Table 3.4 Degung Tuning**

Sundanese Number	Sundanese Pitch Name	Western Pitch Equivalent
1	barang	G
2	kenong	F#
3	panelu	D
4	bem	C
5	singgul	B

intervals, but, unlike pelog, pelog degung is a five-tone, rather than a seven-tone, scale (Harrell 1975:879). The pelog degung scale is further differentiated from true pelog because some of its intervals sound like slendro intervals; as discussed earlier, the degung tuning is compatible with salendro gamelan instruments when rebab players and singers use it.

Musicians name the five pitches of pelog degung with the same names they use for salendro (that is, from high to low, barang, kenong, panelu, bem, and singgul). Unlike salendro and true pelog, which are not easily represented by the Western pitch system, however, pelog degung's intervals are relatively close to intervals that can be played on a piano. If the barang is equivalent to a "G" on the piano, the other pitches would be fairly close to the pitches outlined in Table 3.4. Sundanese musicians sometimes number the five pitches of the pelog degung scale. Once again, Sundanese musicians assign the number "1" to the highest pitch in the scale.

Compared to the gamelan ensembles of Central Java and Bali, degung is quite small. A basic degung consists of only a few bronze instruments—bonang, two saron-type instruments (panerus and peking), goong, and jengglong—supplemented by a bamboo flute called *suling* and a set of drums called *gendang*. As few as six or seven musicians are enough to perform most pieces.

The degung's bonang consists of fourteen pots arranged in a single row. Each pot is a small bossed gong. As is characteristic of all bonang-type instruments, the pots are laid with their bosses facing up over ropes that are stretched in a wooden frame. In the degung bonang case, the frame often is divided into two sections, which are placed to form a V-shape. The bonang player sits inside the V, facing its point. By



Figure 3.22. *Degung instruments: peking (left), jengglong (at rear), bonang (front)*  
(Henry Spiller)

twisting the torso to face either right, center, or left, the player can easily reach all the pots with either hand. Some bonang frames include three sections rather than two, which are arranged in a U shape (as is the case with the bonang degung illustrated in Figure 3.22).

Each of the two mallets is a wooden stick about one half inch in diameter. About half of the stick is padded with a thin layer of rubber and then wrapped in yarn or cloth. To play a note, the player holds the bare wood section of the stick in the hand and hits the boss of one of the pots with the padded portion of the stick. The pot's sound can be damped by firmly pressing the padded portion of the stick onto the boss of the vibrating pot. When playing melodies, bonang players often alternate left and right hand strokes so that each note can be damped with one hand while the other plays the next note. One characteristic feature of the bonang's sound is the soft but audible sound of damping, which lends an air of understated rhythmic complexity to the bonang idiom.

Each of the two saron-type instruments in a basic degung ensemble has approximately fourteen keys (the precise number may vary from gamelan to gamelan). The two instruments have different pitch ranges. The lowest pitch of the panerus (which some people call demung; see Figure 3.23) is typically an octave below the lowest pitch of the peking (also called *titil* or *cempres*). Because each instrument has so



Figure 3.23. *Degung instruments: bonang (left), panerus (right), goong/kempul (rear right) (Henry Spiller)*

many keys, there is considerable overlap between the two instruments' ranges; the upper keys of the panerus have the same pitches as the bottom keys of the peking. As is the case with most saron-type instruments, a panerus or peking player hits the keys of the instruments with a wooden hammer, which is held in the right hand, and damps the ringing sound of the metal keys by pinching them with the left hand.

Jengglong is a gong chime with six gongs. In degung ensembles, the individual gongs often are suspended vertically from a frame, presenting a vertical wall of shiny gongs to the performer, who strikes them with a pair of padded mallets. The sound of jengglong gongs can be damped in the same way that bonang pots are damped, although they are sometimes left ringing. Jengglong also can be mounted on a U-shaped horizontal frame (as they are in Figure 3.22).

In very old degung ensembles, the jengglong player used the largest and lowest-pitched jengglong pot to provide the kind of phrase punctuation usually played on large hanging gongs. Most modern degung include a separate gong, much larger than the jengglong gongs and hanging in its own frame, to provide this punctuation. Once again, this large gong is called by the Sundanese word *goong*.

Sundanese people are fond of creating "folk etymologies" called *ki-rata* that purport to explain the derivation of everyday terms, but which actually provide metaphorical insight into the clusters of ideas sur-

rounding the term. In a kirata, each syllable of the word in question is attributed to another word; the words are then arranged to create an obscure sentence that somehow illuminates the significance of the word at hand. A group of degung experts report a kirata for the word degung: It is a shortening of the phrase “deg ngadeg ka nu Agung,” which means “we must always be pious toward God.” The name thus reminds people that the sound of the degung ensemble is an example of something exalted (Tjarmedi, Suparman et al. 1997:11).

The famous Dutch ethnomusicologist Jaap Kunst reported in the 1920s that another name for the instrument now called jengglong was degung, and that it was this particular instrument that gave the ensemble its name. Very few people call this instrument by the name degung in the present, however. It does seem likely, however, that it was the presence of a degung/jengglong that differentiated the old degung ensembles that were present in some of the Sundanese kabupaten from other archaic ensembles such as goong renteng and sekaten.

The exact chronology of the development of degung ensembles in Priangan is hazy. Perhaps ensembles similar to degung were played in the courts of the Sundanese Hindu-Javanese kingdom of Pajajaran. Evidence of this is indirect, consisting only of stories associated with heirloom instruments in the kraton of Cirebon. Three of the Cirebonese kraton own sets of instruments called *denggun*; these are dated back to the fifteenth century and are reputed to have been acquired when Pajajaran was conquered (North 1988:4; Ricklefs 1993:37). The repertory consists of only eight pieces, of which contemporary musicians know only two (Wright 1978:6:2–22).

Degung (and denggun, for that matter) may also be descendents of the gamelan instruments originally brought to the Sundanese courts by Mataram conquerors when they delegated their governing authority to an already existing Pajajaran aristocracy. Playing the instruments and music of Mataram in the former courts of Pajajaran would have provided a very clear sign both of Mataram’s domination and authority over the aristocrats, as well as of these aristocrats’ delegated authority over the Sundanese.

Over the course of two or three centuries, more modern forms of gamelan ensembles became popular among the bupati. Several of the kabupaten, however, maintained sets of degung instruments. For much of its existence, degung consisted only of the bronze instruments described earlier (bonang, saron, jengglong, and goong) along with a drum or two. It is not clear, however, exactly what sort of music



these instruments provided; the instruments may have been played to welcome the bupati's guests or to provide background music to the aristocrats' various leisure activities (such as hunting and sailing). Although degung's patrons were all aristocrats, the musicians themselves were not; rather, they were servants brought in from the surrounding communities.

Degung music retained its exclusive association with the upper class well into the twentieth century. In 1921, a group of Sundanese aristocrats and Dutch civil servants collaborated on an extravagant theatrical production. The performance was to be presented at a meeting of the Java Instituut (a Dutch organization interested in Javanese culture) in Bandung. One of the meeting's themes was the problem of reconciling traditional Javanese and Sundanese values with those of the modern world. One hidden agenda of the meeting was to articulate a particularly Sundanese identity to the Dutch and other foreign visitors, who were more familiar with Javanese and Balinese cultures.

The bupati of Bandung, R. H. A. A. Wiranatakusumah (see Figure 3.24) collaborated with another well-known Sundanese aristocrat, P. A. A. Djajadiningrat, to come up with a production that would showcase Sundanese culture in the context of an increasingly modernized Dutch-controlled Indonesia. They decided to base their drama on a Sundanese legend called "Lutung Kasarung" rather than on one of the more conventional Indian epic stories. They also decided to use uniquely Sundanese musical forms—including degung—for the drama's accompaniment in lieu of the more typical gamelan salendro/pelog ensembles that accompanied upper- and lower-class theatrical productions.

The Bandung kabupaten's music director was a highly-regarded musician named Idi. (Although Sundanese and Javanese aristocrats have long, flowery names such as Djajadiningrat, as well as initials that indicate their rank and lineage such as R. T. A., ordinary Sundanese individuals sometimes have a single name.) Idi elected to use an expanded degung ensemble to accompany the production. He added a bamboo flute called *suling* to provide the more florid melodies that people were used to hearing for theatrical music, as well as *gendang* drums which were essential for accompanying movement.

The ordinary *suling* was designed to play in a register and at a volume that was not quite appropriate for degung. A special *suling*, which came to be called *suling degung*, was developed that was smaller, higher-pitched, shriller, and louder than normal bamboo flutes. Because it





*Figure 3.24. R. H. A. A. Wiranatakusumah, bupati of Bandung (1920–1931; 1935–1945) (photo and print collection of the Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde, Leiden, Netherlands)*

would need to play only the five pitches of the pelog degung scale, sul-ing degung were made with only four finger holes (in contrast to the usual six holes that facilitate playing a variety of scales).

Gendang were essentially the same drums that Sundanese musicians used to accompany all sorts of theatrical movement and dance—one large barrel-shaped drum called *gendang indung* (“mother drum”) and one small barrel-shaped drum called *gendang leutik* (“small drum”) or *kulanter*.

The addition of these two instruments greatly enhanced the ensemble’s range of expression; this expanded instrumentation quickly be-

came the norm for degung ensembles in the kabupaten. People in other parts of West Java heard the new instrumentation when Idi's group travelled to various cities to provide accompaniment for a silent film version of "Lutung Kasarung."

This enhanced degung ensemble was still the exclusive domain of the kabupaten. Not long afterwards, however, degung was exported outside the kabupaten for the first time to provide entertainment at a wedding. Subsequently, an independent degung group, named Purbasasaka and led by a kabupaten musician named Oyo, was formed to play at events outside the kabupaten. To retain some sense of the aristocratic privilege, their aristocratic patrons prohibited them from playing particular signature kabupaten pieces, such as "Palwa" and "Layar Putri" (Soekanda 1991; Tisana 1997:28–29). Idi and his colleagues composed a number of pieces that were just different enough from the forbidden pieces to satisfy their patrons, but similar enough to evoke the same feelings of prestige among their new non-kabupaten audiences. These pieces remain the core of the degung repertory, and often are called *lagu klasik* ("classical pieces").

### *Lagu Klasik*

Idi is credited with having composed the lion's share of the lagu klasik repertory during the 1920s; only a few pieces, such as "Ayun Ambing" and "Lalayaran," predate him. A number of other influential degung musicians in succeeding generations, such as Ono Sukarna, U. Tarya, and Entjar Tjarmedi, contributed lagu klasik as well. For a piece to become a lagu klasik, however, it must become widespread enough so that it takes on a life of its own and becomes decoupled from its composer. Sometimes a lagu klasik is attributed to several different composers; it is a true sign that a piece has "made it" when people begin to forget exactly who composed it.

It is not simply age and fame that transforms a piece into a lagu klasik; the designation of lagu klasik suggests a particular musical style as well. They are characterized by irregular formal structures, a texture in which all the instruments play simultaneous variations of the melody, a few stock melodic phrases that show up in many pieces, and simple drum parts played with sticks.

One of Idi's pieces, "Ujung Laut," illustrates several characteristics of degung lagu klasik. For one thing, it has been in the public domain

long enough that several different versions have emerged. Although they all share the piece's main identifying melodic phrases, the different versions occasionally take a different melodic turn, or repeat a phrase more or fewer times than the others. The version described here is that performed by Burhan Sukarma, who was a musician with the government-run radio station, Radio Republik Indonesia (RRI) degung group in the 1960s and 70s, and currently lives in San Jose, California, where he directs a degung group called Pusaka Sunda ("Sundanese heirloom"); Pusaka Sunda's recording of "Ujung Laut" is included on the CD that accompanies this book as Track 8.

One way to look at the form of "Ujung Laut" is to divide it into three phrases, each of which ends with a stroke of the large goong. Each of the phrases in Burhan Sukarma's version has a different number of beats (the numbers in parentheses are the timings for each phrase from the rendition of "Ujung Laut" on the CD).

Phrase 1: 64 (0:11–0:40; 2:08–2:37; 4:02–4:33)

Phrase 2: 80 (0:40–1:15; 2:37–3:10)

Phrase 3: 120 (1:15–2:08; 3:10–4:02)

Each phrase has its own characteristic shape. Phrase 1 begins on a very high note, which is sustained for the first 16 beats, and then takes the next 16 beats to meander downward a full octave, where it hovers for another 16 beats before taking the final 16 beats to descend once again to a very satisfying cadence at the goong stroke (see Figure 3.25).

Phrase 2 can be divided into four subphrases. The second subphrase is a repetition of the first—a meandering descent. The third is almost another repetition, except that it abruptly ascends at the end instead of descending. All three of these subphrases occupy 16 beats. The fourth subphrase takes up the remaining 32 beats; it is a thrilling descent to the goong stroke, and is a stock cadential phrase found in many other degung lagu klasik. Burhan Sukarma calls this phrase "Palwa B"; he remembers it as the second phrase ("B") of another lagu klasik piece called "Palwa," and uses this name as a shorthand to refer to the phrase when it appears in other pieces.

Phrase 3 has three subphrases; the first two are exactly the same, and each occupies 40 beats. This subphrase rises precipitously, then descends again, only to rise again at the very end. The third subphrase begins similarly and also occupies 40 beats, but ends slightly differently than the other two by descending to a satisfying low ending.

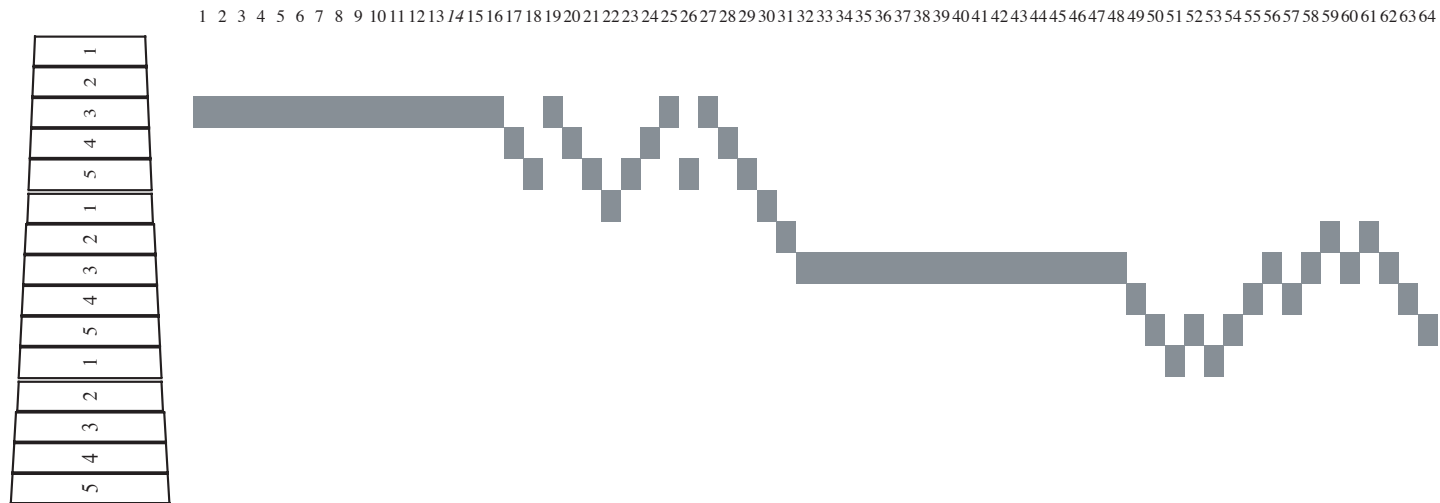


Figure 3.25. "Ujung Laut": melodic contour of phrase 1

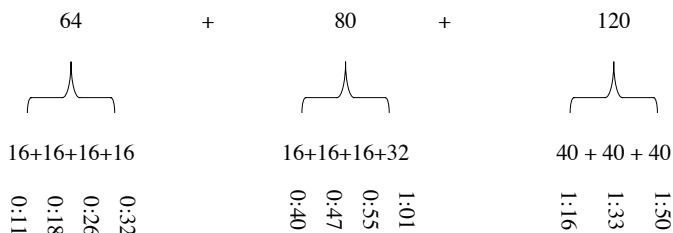


Figure 3.26. “Ujung Laut”: phrase structure (with CD timings)

A schematic summary of the phrase outlines of “Ujung Laut” (see Figure 3.26) illustrates its irregular formal structures. Other lagu klasik are also irregular, but each has its own peculiar irregularities; the form outlined in Figure 3.26 is unique to “Ujung Laut.” These irregular phrase structures present a striking contrast to the relentlessly regular quadratic structure of most other gamelan music.

The bonang plays a particularly prominent role in the lagu klasik style. Most often the bonang player provides the pangkat for the piece; in fact, the exact same bonang pangkat opens quite a few lagu klasik. Once the piece has begun, the bonang player provides a particularly florid version of the main melody, sometimes playing runs, sometimes playing octaves, and always adding rhythmic interest with creative damping techniques. The panerus plays essentially the same melody as the bonang, but without the syncopation or rhythmic variety. If the varied rhythms of the bonang part are akin to wrinkles in a piece of cloth, the panerus part is a “smoothed over” version of the same melody—it moves along with notes of even time values, as if all of the rhythmic variety had been “ironed out.” The cempres part, on the other hand, dances around the bonang part with even more rhythmic intricacies. The suling, too, plays essentially the same tune, but with soaring sustained notes, dramatic trills and vibratos, and a certain rhythmic freedom added in.

### *Modern Degung*

Despite the gradual erosion of degung’s exclusivity, degung was little known except among the upper class before the 1950s. In the 1950s, the local Bandung station of Radio Republik Indonesia (RRI) began to broadcast degung music. In keeping with the nationalist goals of the

government-run RRI, much of the radio station's programming was in the national language because the government wanted to promote the use and understanding of Indonesian. There was also, however, a local programming component in the national programming agenda. The Bandung station maintained a number of Sundanese music ensembles and a staff of Sundanese musicians to provide this local component. RRI Bandung also produced a Sundanese-language broadcast, for which degung provided the theme music (the signature piece was "Ladrak"). This practice had the effect of associating the sound of degung with a particular Sundanese ethnic identity in a national Indonesian context. It was at this time that non-aristocratic people began to build and acquire degung instruments and develop new repertoires and contexts for degung performance (Entis Sutisna, pers. comm., 3/23/99).

One modern use of degung music is, in a sense, a direct outgrowth of the original theatrical drama that led to the formation of the modern degung ensemble. Since the 1920s, multimedia Sundanese theatrical productions involving music, dance, and theater called *gending karesmen* provided a medium for entertainment and artistic experimentation. The 1921 "Lutung Kasarung" performance, with its innovative use of Sundanese music, provided a model for subsequent productions. A *gending karesmen* created by Wahyu Wibisana in 1958 included a well-received section that reminded viewers of the part of a Sundanese wedding ceremony where the groom is escorted into the bride's home (Tisana 1997:31). In the intervening forty years it has become increasingly popular to include a *gending karesmen*-like performance, based on this 1958 production, in Sundanese wedding ceremonies (Bratawidjaja 1990). The popularity of this wedding performance has increased in part because of the broadcast of such wedding productions on television (pers. comm., Otong Rasta, 3/26/99).

This special wedding performance is most typically called an *upacara adat*, although that term more generally refers to any traditional ceremony (*upacara* means "ceremony," and *adat* refers to traditional laws, customs, and values). In fact, some sticklers for accuracy suggest that the wedding performance is better described as *upacara khusus* ("special ceremony") because it is clearly *not* adat, but rather something quite new (pers. comm., Entis Sutisna, 3/23/99).

Typically, a professional group called a *lingkung seni* (arts circle), often abbreviated "LS," provides all the music and entertainment components for a wedding, including the upacara adat. Figure 3.27 shows



Figure 3.27. *Upacara adat performed by LS Rawit Group (Henry Spiller)*

part of LS Rawit Group's upacara adat; members of the troupe carry umbrellas and dance to the accompaniment of degung music as they escort the groom and his party to the bride's home (where the wedding celebration will take place). Lingkung seni are usually managed by a charismatic, business-savvy person, who often is a well-known artist in his or her own right (Williams 1998:722). These arts entrepreneurs serve as musical agents or brokers, making and maintaining the connections required to provide a variety of performances for their clients. Lingkung seni provide one-stop shopping for most or all of a host's performance requirements, usually own all the musical instruments and costumes, and have a stable of performers on call for the performance genres they provide.

Sometimes, however, the degung portion of an event might be provided by an amateur group, most often a group of women who rehearse together as much for social enrichment as for musical enjoyment. When they perform, the women take great care to dress up in

elaborate, matching outfits, makeup, and hairstyles. These groups are called *gamelan ibu-ibu* (women's gamelan); although there are still some such groups (the group pictured in Figure 3.22 and Figure 3.23 was photographed in 1999), their popularity peaked in the 1960s and 1970s.

Since the 1950s, the degung ensemble's repertory has expanded to include all sorts of musical styles. Many of the new developments in degung involve the addition of singing—an inappropriate addition in the minds of some traditionalists, but popular nevertheless. The musicians at RRI Bandung first added a female chorus to their degung ensemble in the 1960s (Sadie 2001:V12, p.338).

Speakers of the Sundanese language use two words to describe singing. *Tembang* refers to a very formal style of singing refined poetry, while *kawih* describes an earthier style of singing in which the words are usually simple couplets. Tembang-style singing in West Java is associated with the aristocracy and involves complex poetic forms imported from the courts of Central Java (such as the pangkur poetic form discussed in Chapter Two; in Central Java the generic term for this sort of poetic form is *macapat*, while in West Java these forms are known collectively as *pupuh*). Kawih, on the other hand, is associated with the common people.

One particular style of such Sundanese courtly tembang singing from the kabupaten of the city of Cianjur earned a wide reputation throughout the Priangan for its beauty and refinement, and was imitated in other parts of West Java as well. Most people called this style of singing *Cianjuran*, referring to its place of origin. Cianjuran involved solo vocalists, both male and female, who intoned poems that described the legends of the Pajajaran kingdom with florid, unmetered melodies to the accompaniment of a suling and a plucked string instrument called *kacapi*. As the Cianjuran style became known outside of Cianjur, the genre expanded and changed as musicians imitated it and experimented with new ideas. In recognition of this influence that spreads well beyond the city of Cianjur, this style of singing is often referred to as *tembang Sunda*.

One innovation involved adding a kawih song to the end of a tembang poem. The subject matter of kawih songs were usually lighter in terms of subject matter as well as with regard to musical style. While the tembang poetry and their accompaniments tended to be in free rhythm—that is, without a steady pulse or regular meter—kawih songs were often accompanied by gamelan ensembles that played with a



steady pulse and a clear meter. While both men and women studied and sang the serious *tembang* songs, only women sang the lighter *kawih* songs. Because these *kawih* songs were quite literally added on to the end of *tembang* songs, they became known among *tembang* aficionados as *panambih* (“additions”) or *lagu ekstra* (“extra songs”).

To accompany *kawih* songs, the instrumentalists tried to imitate the sounds and textures of a gamelan ensemble. The *kacapi* players developed a way to imitate both the drum patterns and colotomic instruments with the left hand, while providing a core melody and some elaboration with the right. To further enhance this imitation gamelan, *tembang* ensembles began to include a second, smaller *kacapi* called *rincik* which was played only during *panambih* and provided another layer of gamelan-like melodic elaboration.

A significant portion of the *tembang* Sunda repertory is cast in the *pelog degung* scale (one of three *tembang* Sunda scales). Given the rising popularity of *panambih* songs, which were accompanied by plucked string instruments and *suling* imitating the sound of a gamelan ensemble, and given the existence and increasing popularity of a real gamelan ensemble which, although it was not associated with vocal music, was tuned to the same scale as many *panambih* songs, it was probably only a matter of time before somebody decided to try singing *panambih* songs to *degung* accompaniment. The result was called *degung kawih*.

For *degung kawih*, *degung* musicians play somewhat different parts than they do for *lagu klasik*. In effect, they imitate the idioms of gamelan *salendro* using the *degung* instruments. The *bonang* player, for example, typically chooses the *ketuk-rhythm* octave style of playing characteristic of gamelan *salendro* rather than the more florid melodic style of the *lagu klasik*. The *panerus* and *peking* players, who usually provide melodic renditions of the main melody when performing *lagu klasik*, might choose to imitate the two *saron* of a gamelan *salendro* ensemble and play interlocking parts for a *degung kawih* song. They take advantage of the fact that the ranges of the *panerus* and *peking* overlap, and confine their interlocking parts to the sections of their instruments that have the same pitches. The drummer switches from the simple, austere stick drumming that characterized *lagu klasik* to a more florid style of hand drumming called *tepak melem*.

Sometimes extra instruments are added to the ensemble to enhance the effect. *Kempul*, for example, is an instrument that characterizes

gamelan salendro but is missing from degung; some degung ensembles include a kempul, which the goong player plays for degung kawih songs. Although it is possible to imitate the sound of two interlocking saron with panerus and peking, some ensembles include a matched pair of six- or seven-key saron to provide the interlocking parts for degung kawih.

Some Sundanese musicians were enamored with the sounds of the Western popular music they heard, and looked for ways to combine these new ideas with their own music. In the 1950s, for example, the influential musician and composer Koko Koswara (more familiarly known as Mang Koko) created Western-inspired songs for his popular gamelan salendro groups (Ruswandi 2000:12), as well as Sundanese instruments with diatonic tunings. He felt that, above all, music should appeal to its audience, and should use both traditional and non-traditional means to do so (Ruswandi 2000:29). Many of Mang Koko's songs have become standards; just about any Sundanese child or adult can sing "Badminton" (about Indonesia's most popular sport) or "Pahlawan Bangsa" ("National Heroes"—a patriotic song).

Mang Koko's protégé, Nano S., alarmed that the younger generations seemed to prefer to abandon gamelan music and other traditional Sundanese forms completely in favor of imported popular music, innovated hybrid forms that he hoped would captivate their young listeners. Nano took advantage of the similarity between the degung tuning and Western diatonic scale to compose melodies that could be accompanied either by *ban* (a Western-style combo with keyboard, guitars, and drums) or by degung. His enormous hit from the 1980s, entitled "Kalangkang" ("Silhouette"), is just as likely to be heard performed with degung or gamelan salendro accompaniment as it is to appear on a karaoke CD with synthesized orchestral accompaniment. Although it has a varied, catchy melody that is difficult to identify as either pelog or sorog, "Kalangkang" is easily accompanied by a basic gamelan piece pattern that is so simple and basic it is known as "Catrik" ("student/disciple").

Many Bandung musicians refer nostalgically to the decades of the 1970s and 80s as *zaman kaset*—the golden age of cassette recordings. During those years, a local recording industry arose in West Java, centered in Bandung, that catered to a market interested in purchasing modern Sundanese music, often with a traditional twist. Cassette technology was inexpensive both for producers and consumers, and busi-

ness boomed. The musicians wistfully remember that they were reasonably well-paid for their services in addition to the opportunity to participate in ground-breaking, experimental projects.

Many of the cassettes produced during these years featured some sort of innovation, and some of the recordings achieved enduring popularity. One degung cassette, entitled *Sangkala Degung*, performed by Grup Gapura, became popular not only among Sundanese listeners, but in other parts of Indonesia as well. Even today, a tourist walking down the street in Bali is likely to hear the sounds of degung emanating from a storefront. (*Sangkala Degung* also was released in the United States by ICON Records in 1985.)

Although the golden age of cassettes is over in West Java, Sundanese musicians are still experimenting with traditional music. In the 1990s, a young musician name Ismet Ruchimat, along with several friends, released recordings featuring a diatonic degung ensemble performing renditions of international hits. *Degung Dedikasi*, as one cassette was titled, featured soaring suling versions of such hits as The Eagles' "Hotel California" and John Lennon's "Imagine." In his more recent projects, Ismet begins with concepts from Sundanese music. The musicians he works with come primarily from the government-sponsored college-level school of the arts (Sekolah Tinggi Seni Indonesia [STSI]) in Bandung, so they all have experience with Sundanese music; by exploiting the conventions of Sundanese gamelan music, such as using a simple outline to generate a variety of complementary instrumental parts, Ismet is able to coordinate the musicians quickly and confidently (Shelley 2002). In 1997, the group took the name CBMW; their album *Rhythmical in Sundanese People* included a variety of fusion projects that combine elements of Sundanese, Balinese, and Western musical traditions in fresh, innovative ways. One of the tracks, entitled "Sambasunda," made a big splash, and since 1998 the group has been known as Sambasunda. (The track entitled "Sambasunda" has been released by The World Music Network in the United States on a compilation CD entitled *The Rough Guide to Indonesia*.)

### **Gamelan in Modern Sundanese Life**

To American ears, Sundanese gamelan music sounds mysterious and exotic. To Sundanese ears, accustomed to hearing gamelan music in the course of everyday life, gamelan music sounds anything but ex-

traordinary. In fact, to many young Sundanese especially, gamelan music sounds hopelessly old-fashioned. Many young people consider gamelan music to be something relevant to their parents or grandparents, but not especially meaningful to them. It strikes them as outdated, unsophisticated, and even hokey, especially when compared to imported and domestic popular music—metal, rap, dangdut, and the like. Many of the musical experiments described above appeal to these listeners because they successfully bring local flavor to international tastes or (vice versa) bestow some cosmopolitan panache on familiar sounds.

Perhaps an appropriate analogy would be most young Americans' attitudes toward accordion music. The very timbre of an accordion is enough to turn many Americans off—some people find it hard to take any accordion music seriously. On the other hand, the sound of an accordion can trigger deep feelings of nostalgia, even in the most jaded young Americans, reminding them, for example, of carefree times watching the Lawrence Welk Show on TV with their grandparents. Some young people find themselves inexplicably drawn to accordion music despite their peers' general disdain. And there are even those who parlay the accordion's hokiness and nostalgia into something hip, new, and exciting. In all cases, the sound of the accordion evokes complex reactions in its American listeners, carrying the baggage of generations of different meanings.

It is the same with gamelan music in West Java. So, even among folks who do not particularly care for gamelan music, there is a place for gamelan music. It is customary for Sundanese families to host a ceremonial event called a *hajat* to mark significant events in their lives. At its most basic, a *hajat* is simply a communal meal; the hosts share food with their neighbors to bring about a state of well-being. Making sure that things go well is especially important around the time of significant life-cycle events (Wessing 1978:63). Particularly important events, such as a boy's circumcision or a child's marriage, call for particularly lavish *hajat*. The ultimate goal of the *hajat* is to bring together many guests, provide them with food, and create a *ramé* ("lively") atmosphere. And, indeed, enormous numbers of people receive invitations and attend. There is usually some form of entertainment throughout the party to increase the *ramé* quotient. Most guests stay just long enough to acknowledge the honorees, eat some food, and enjoy a bit of entertainment; they then leave to make room for other guests. Ideally, the *hajat* will be crowded and lively throughout the day.

Hosting a big hajat at home requires the cooperation of at least a few immediate neighbors. Usually the hosts transform the area around their house, including the houses and yards of the neighbors, into a completely different world for the hajat. Somehow, a fairly large gathering area must be carved out of the street, terraces, and yards; this may involve temporarily blocking traffic and removing fences, doors, and even windows. There is always a raised stage area, covered with an awning if necessary, for the entertainers. Usually several kitchens are mobilized to prepare and serve the constant supply of food for the guests. For a wedding, one room in the host's house is completely re-decorated—draped with sumptuous cloths and refurnished with grandiose carved furniture—to serve as a receiving room. In Bandung, many people hire a hall in which to host their hajat. Often, certain ceremonies are still performed at home, in the presence of a select group of guests, before moving the party to the hall, which provides stages, furniture, catering, and room for hordes of guests.

Some hajat involve entertainment all day and all night. Hajat are one of the primary venue for *wayang golek* (rod puppet theater) performances, which begin in the evening and last all night. Sundanese wayang golek is similar to Central Javanese wayang kulit: A single puppeteer called a dalang manipulates puppets, provides all the narration and dialogue, and provides cues to the gamelan ensemble that accompanies the play. In wayang golek, however, the puppets are not flat leather shadow puppets, but beautifully carved and painted three-dimensional doll rod puppets (see Figure 3.28; Track 7 on the accompanying CD is from a performance of wayang golek). Wayang performances remain popular among all classes and ages of Sundanese because a good dalang finds ways to make the stories (usually episodes from the Indian epics the Mahabharata and the Ramayana) relevant to people's lives. The dalang appeals to the senses and the intellect at many levels—he waxes philosophical, he produces withering political commentary, and he makes jokes that range from crude to subtle. And, if spectators become bored during the seven-hour performance, they can always watch the musicians, especially the female singers, talk with their friends, or buy something to eat.

Gamelan music is an integral part of a wayang performance. The gamelan begins to play long before the dalang appears on the scene, to keep spectators entertained and to create the ramé atmosphere that characterizes successful events. As the play proper begins, the gamelan plays a standard sequence of pieces to accompany the dalang as he sets



Figure 3.28. Wayang golek stage (Henry Spiller)

up the first scene on the puppet stage—a couple of banana logs laid across a frame, into which the *dalang* can stick the puppets. Then, the gamelan accompanies him as he narrates the *murwa*, an opening narration, and sings the opening songs that set the mood for the first scene.

As the play progresses, the gamelan is always there to accompany the puppet's dances and fights, and to usher them on and off stage. At times, the *dalang* takes a cigarette break, and cues the ensemble to play music for the crowd's entertainment. Such pieces always feature the *pasinden*—the female singers who are often as popular as the *dalang* himself.

In recent times, other venues (and shorter time frames) for wayang have become possible, and even all-night performances have become shorter. Sometimes political parties, government agencies, or private companies will sponsor a wayang performance to attract attention to political candidate, publicize new policies, or to celebrate a company milestone.

*Tayuban*—a kind of dance party with gamelan accompaniment—were popular *hajatan* entertainments in the 1960s and 1970s. In the 1980s, performances featuring *jaipongan*—another dance genre featuring gamelan *salendro* (see Chapter Four)—edged *tayuban* out. Some hosts began to prefer a lower-key approach and hired a group to

perform tembang Sunda and *kacapi-suling*. And certainly some people preferred something a bit more modern, such as karaoke, *ban* (rock band), or dangdut (see Chapter Four).

With all these possible entertainments from which to choose, some people began to insist on choosing them all. Lingkung seni directors began to serve as musical agents or brokers, making and maintaining the connections required to provide a variety of performances for their clients.

For a wedding celebration, a lingkung seni might be asked to provide an upacara adat in the morning, followed by degung kawih, followed by a jaipongan performance, followed by dangdut dancing in the late afternoon. Alternatively, the hosts might request a comedy performance, or a wayang, or a karaoke singalong, or pop tunes.

Filling these requests often places significant demands on the lingkung seni—they may have to bring a set of degung instruments, a gamelan salendro, and a keyboard and other band instruments for dangdut, not to mention all the musicians required to play these styles. One means that some lingkung seni employ to minimize the number of instruments they have to carry is a *gamelan selap*—a special gamelan that includes extra keys and gongs that enable the instruments to play in salendro, pelog, degung, and other surupan as well. The word *selap* means to put something in between other things; in a gamelan selap, the extra keys required to produce the degung tuning are positioned in between the various salendro keys, taking advantage of the fact that degung and salendro have several common pitches. The addition of two or three extra keys, for a total of seven or eight per octave, would result in a gamelan that can be played in salendro and degung. Most gamelan selap include a couple more keys—a total of ten per octave—to provide a reasonable approximation of some of the true pelog scales, such as pelog jawar, as well. The extra saron keys are apparent on the gamelan selap played by LS Rawit Group in Figure 3.11.

The specific tuning for gamelan selap requires a little bit of compromise and a great deal of skill and cleverness to find the exact pitches that seem to sound in tune in several different contexts. Figure 3.29 shows the layout of the saron from the gamelan selap owned by the dalang Asep Sunandar Sunarya, as documented by Andrew Weintraub; which keys the players select to perform in the various surupan is indicated in the figure (Weintraub 1997:124). When performing in salendro and the salendro-derived surupan, which can be conceptualized as consisting of small, medium, and large intervals, the musicians play ad-

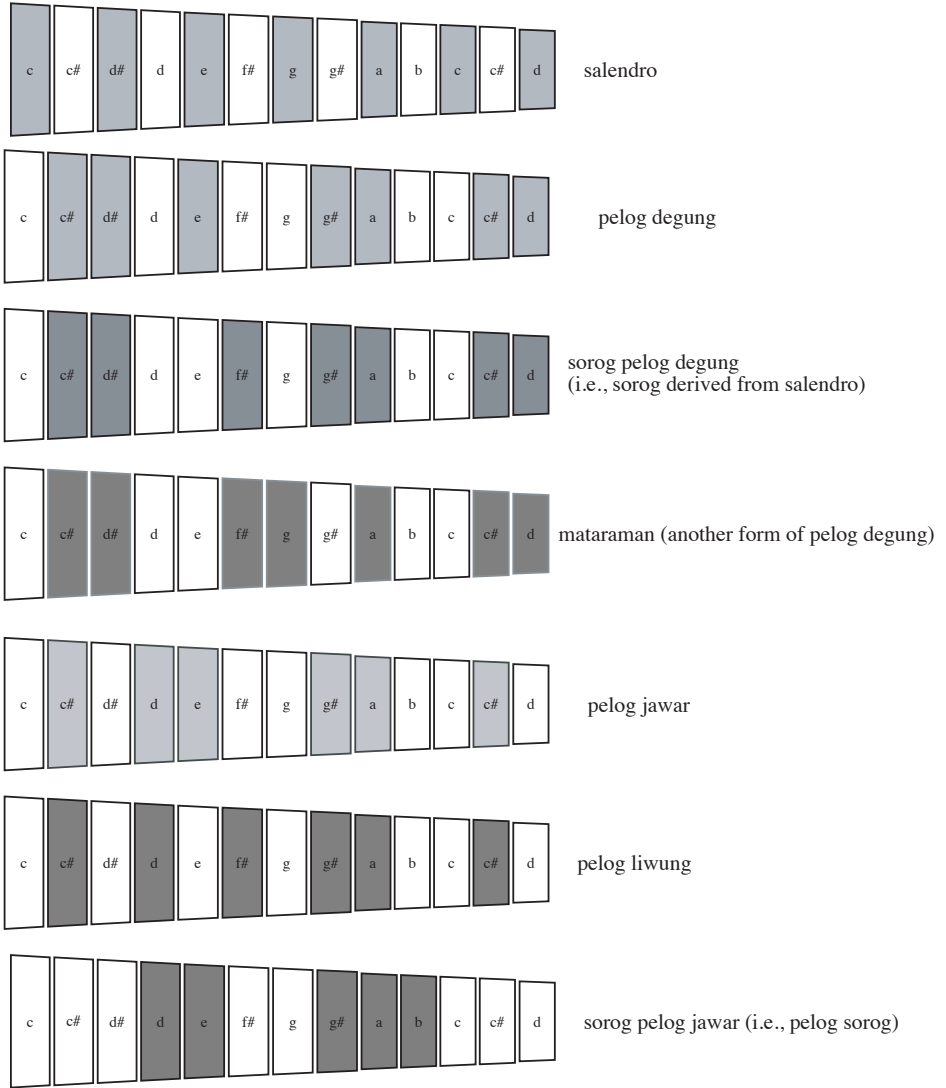


Figure 3.29. Saron layout for gamelan selap (after Weintraub 1997:124)

jacent keys to achieve a small interval; they skip one key to produce a medium interval; and they skip two keys for a large interval.

Of course, the instrumentalists must remember to skip keys when they are playing familiar pieces—it takes a little time to become accustomed to playing on a gamelan selap. Instruments such as the bonang, for which the players learn and remember their realization techniques



as kinetic patterns, present special problems. It is possible to remove the keys and pots that are not needed at the moment, and some musicians do this if they know in advance that they will not need to switch tuning systems quickly. It also should be stressed that some listeners find some of the tunings produced by gamelan selap to be somewhat out-of-tune—beyond the limits of conventional tuning variation.

On the other hand, having all of these tunings available at once allows for some spectacular musical effects. The *lingkung seni* who use gamelan selap typically have one or two showstopping pieces in which they change tunings several times, leaving their audiences breathless and disoriented as if they had just ridden a thrill ride. Groups can respond to requests for songs that might otherwise have been difficult because of tuning incompatibilities between the song and the gamelan. And superstar *wayang golek* troupes, for whom the use of gamelan selap became standard in the 1990s, could create vivid theatrical effects by adjusting the tuning of the gamelan accompaniment to suit the mood of the dramatic scene.

The idea of gamelan selap is not particularly new. R. M. A. Kusumadinata, a Sundanese music theorist, developed gamelan instruments that could play in several *surupan* as early as the 1930s; he used them to work out his ideas about Sundanese tuning systems. All those extra keys and pots made such gamelan sets prohibitively expensive. In addition, musicians were accustomed to a certain standardization of gamelan instruments; for the most part, musicians found gamelan selap instruments intimidatingly difficult to play. The recent rise in popularity for gamelan selap after so many years of disinterest is probably connected to a variety of developments, including the desire of audiences to hear more variety, the rise of all-purpose *lingkung seni* who could provide a variety of musical entertainments, and the relative wealth of a few very successful arts entrepreneurs who could afford the increased cost of gamelan selap instruments and felt that the impressive display that all that bronze provided enhanced their status and popularity (Weintraub 1997).

### Conclusion

Whether they think Sundanese gamelan music is hopelessly old-fashioned or find it to be moving, exciting, and invigorating, most Sundanese audiences take the sound of Sundanese gamelan for granted. It

is something quite ordinary—one of those things people are simply used to. The significance of gamelan music—as a symbol of Sundanese identity, as a model for Sundanese values, as a link to the Sundanese past—is simply not something that they consciously consider.

Nevertheless, gamelan music cannot help but have these meanings for Sundanese audiences. Along the lines of the precedent set by ancient goong renteng music, the fact the gamelan is played—and heard—is enough. Seeing the shapes and hearing the sounds of the instruments connects individuals with the events of Sundanese history—degung evokes the aristocrats of Pajajaran, gamelan salendro speaks of the assimilation of ideas and customs from Mataram and Central Java, as well as domination first by the Dutch and then by the Indonesian national government. Hearing the scales called pelog degung and sorog clash sweetly with salendro as the rebab player and pasinden superimpose these uniquely Sundanese surupan over the imported Central Javanese tuning recalls how a unique Sundanese identity persists despite centuries of outside domination. Perceiving a distinctly Sundanese sound emerging from ensemble music that shares a common underlying musical structure with other parts of Indonesia emphasizes that the Sundanese shared a heritage with the rest of the nation. Combining the old instruments and sounds with new ones models the ways that modern Sundanese cope with a changing world and explore what it means to be Sundanese, Indonesian, and citizens of the world—all at the same time.

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# Identity, Authenticity, and Tradition in Sundanese Dance Music

Throughout Indonesia, gamelan music often serves as an accompaniment for dance or other movement-oriented performances (such as *wayang*). This chapter explores the relationship between Sundanese dance and music, and how Sundanese individuals manipulate music and dance as units of cultural meaning to make sense out of the circumstances of their own lives. Exploring the continuities and changes in Sundanese tradition illuminates the significance of the performing arts not only in Indonesia, but everywhere else as well.

There is a long-standing close relationship between Sundanese music, especially drumming, and dance; most commentators on Indonesian dance cite the prominent drumming as a distinguishing characteristic of all Sundanese dance music. The presence of an aural analog for movement elements is a deep-seated component of a Sundanese dance aesthetic; any movement, it seems, requires an audible reaction.

An ancient village ritual dance (described in Soepandi and Atmadibrata 1976:71–75; Atmadibrata 1980:212) illustrates a practical consideration in this aesthetic connection. In *dog-dog lojor*, a ceremony following the harvesting of rice, the farmers make music while carrying their harvested rice to the storage area. Bundles of rice are tied to either end of poles which the harvesters carry on their shoulders. The rice on the pole becomes a musical instrument called *rongkeng* that makes a rhythmic squeaking sound when carried properly. The sound of the *rongkeng* is a natural consequence of their swinging motion—an audible reaction. Several *dog-dog* (single-head drums), each played by a marcher, provide a rhythmic accompaniment that interlocks with the

sound of the *rongkeng*. The drum sounds coordinate the actions of the farmers; the sounds also elevate the level of excitement and incite the marchers to have a good time while getting the work done.

But music and dance are not just about good times; they play a much more important role in Sundanese communities. Music and dance provide a context in which moral values can be learned, practiced, and challenged; the aesthetic dimension of music and dance, however, make this engagement with values unconscious. Learning how to move “beautifully” or “naturally” is really learning how to move in a way that is consistent with social norms. Practicing dance trains these social values into the bodies of the participants. Music (and drumming) that motivates good movement is judged to be aesthetically pleasing—good music.

Much Sundanese music and dance has its origins in ceremonial and ritual activities connected with the planting and harvesting of rice. In the distant past, villagers found ways to increase the likelihood of a successful agricultural cycle. Their methods were not limited to practical farming techniques; they also developed rituals to encourage the nature spirits, which they believed animated the earth, rice, and rain so vital to their success, to work in their favor.

They considered the sky, and the rain which fell out of it, to be masculine, while they conceived the ground, and the rice which grew out of it, as feminine. In rituals, a village woman represented Dewi Sri—the rice goddess—while the village men played the part of the sky and the rain. They hoped that their erotic dance movements, which were a metaphor for a fertile growing season, would ensure agricultural success (Sumardjo 1999). Thus, important beliefs about cosmology, cultivation, and culture were learned and reinforced in the process of dancing.

Over the centuries, however, the Sundanese have had to contend with other systems of values, which sometimes deemed the erotic nature of these village ceremonies to be unacceptable. Dance and music then became arenas for exploring these clashing values. Once again, the aesthetic nature of these activities masks the important cultural work that goes on; new forms are thought simply to be better or more beautiful if they successfully model a new, modified system of values.

Changes in Sundanese music and dance over the past hundred years or so illuminate this process. An examination of a variety of music and dance traditions in West Java, along with the social changes that

motivated their development, shows how these aesthetic activities represent trying on for size different sets of values. The focus in this chapter is on six significant genres—*ketuk tilu*, *tayuban*, *tari kursus*, *bajidoran*, *jaipongan*, and *dangdut*—which cut across Sundanese geography and history, but which are unified by a consistently Sundanese approach to connecting dancing and drumming.

### Village Ceremonial Dance: Ketuk Tilu

Even in the twenty-first century, Sundanese village life follows the yearly cycles of weather patterns and their effects on agriculture. The basic outlines of this ritual—men dancing as a group with a single female dancer—has continued in various forms for hundreds, perhaps thousands, of years, in village dance events associated with the beginning of the planting season and the harvest. Although the details of the dance events differ from village to village and from generation to generation, a few basic characteristics remained fixed. The female role became the responsibility of a professional female entertainer who sang and danced to the accompaniment of a simple musical ensemble. The ensemble always included drumming, and the drum patterns were closely coordinated with dance movements. The ritual's main participants—male dancers—continued to be men from the community, who let the drumming animate them to dance freely.

*Ketuk tilu* is an umbrella term that modern historians of Sundanese dance usually apply to these village dance events. The word *ketuk* usually refers to a small knobbed gong, and *tilu* means three in Sundanese; the name *ketuk tilu*, therefore, means something like “ketuks three,” and refers to one of the instruments in the musical ensemble—the gong chime with three *ketuk* (see Figure 4.1). Quite a few dance traditions that fit the general description of *ketuk tilu*, however, do not include the three-*ketuk* gong chime; it seems more precise to use the term *ketuk tilu* to refer to the entire performance context rather than the instrument itself (Sugiharwati 1980:9; Amelia 1996).

It is difficult to trace with any certainty the history and development of *ketuk tilu* and related music and dance traditions. Following the lead of the eminent Indonesian dance historian Soedarsono, who describes three periods of Indonesian dance (primitive, feudal, and modern), it is common to describe three main periods of *ketuk tilu* devel-



*Figure 4.1. Three ketuk as seen from above; goong (right) and rebab (left) also are visible (Henry Spiller)*

opment: (1) prehistory, (2) a period of popularity beginning in the nineteenth century, and (3) a revival in the 1970s, in the form of jaipongan.

The description provided above for prehistoric ketuk tilu dancing is, of course, primarily conjecture. Some people look to the Baduy village celebrations for a window to the past, believing that these isolated Sundanese communities might preserve something of ancient customs. And, indeed, Baduy planting and harvest celebrations involve men dancing in honor of the rice goddess (Zanten 1995). They use angklung and drums for accompaniment, however; there are no signs of the female singer-dancer or of the ketuk accompaniment. The ubiquity of these elements elsewhere in West Java, however, attests to their long history.

As for the second period—nineteenth-century popularity—it is a part of oral history in West Java that ketuk tilu was already well known in 1883, because some people dancing at a ketuk tilu event were killed by a coconut tree felled by the infamous eruption of the volcano Krakatau (Suhaeti 1986:9; Somawijaya 1990:15). And combing through the travelogs written by foreign visitors to Java in the nineteenth century reveals quite a few descriptions of music and dance





Figure 4.2. *Ronggeng dancing wawayangan at a performance at the Bandung Zoo*  
(Henry Spiller)

events that could be construed to be *ketuk tilu* performances, although none of them uses that term specifically.

In keeping with their ritual nature, *ketuk tilu* events followed a ceremonial protocol. An event began at approximately 10 PM, and was held outdoors. At the center of the performance space stood an oil lamp with three wicks (and thus three flames) called an *oncor*. The light from the oil lamp circumscribed a performance space, bounded by the darkness beyond, in which the participants—*ronggeng* (female singer-dancers), musicians, and the men—performed. The first part of the event was an opening ceremony, consisting of an instrumental overture, called *tatalu*, played by the musicians. Next, the *ronggeng* lined up and faced the audience for the *jajangkungan* (literally, walking on stilts), in which they rose up on their toes at goong strokes in the music. The *jajangkungan* flowed into the *wawayangan* (literally, act like a *wayang* puppet) section (see Figure 4.2) in which the *ronggeng* sang and performed solo or group dances. After the *wawayangan*, the *ronggeng* sat down again, and the musicians performed the sacred song of invocation called “*Kidung*” while the leader of the troupe lit incense and prayed for a successful evening.

The transition out of the opening ceremony and into the participatory event followed, to the accompaniment of a song called “*Erang*.”

Men from the audience could get up and dance with a ronggeng without paying during this transitional piece. After “Erang,” the evening proceeded according to the wishes of the audience; men could request (and pay for) songs to which to dance as well as particular ronggeng with whom to dance. Other men could join the paying dancer on the floor (Soepandi and Atmadibrata 1976:76–81; Sugiharwati 1980:36; Somawijaya 1990:27; Sedyawati, Parani et al. 1995; Atmadibrata 1996: 80–81; Fajaria 1996:35–39).

Male ketuk tilu dancers cultivated a personal style of individualized movements, and the ronggeng’s movements followed and “served” her male partner’s movements (Somawijaya 1990:56). When dancing, the men’s foot movements were expected to coordinate with the drum patterns, while their hands and the rest of their bodies were free (Sugiharwati 1980:38). Their goal was to dance freely and spontaneously, but in keeping with the drumming patterns played by the musicians. They based their motions both on the musical rhythm and upon their own desires.

One means men had for following their own desires was by choosing a song whose character and mood was compatible with their own. The man who started the dance got to choose the piece, and he usually selected a form and a song that would enhance the kind of dancing he wanted to do—humorous, acrobatic, artistic, or whatever.

Quite a few ketuk tilu songs are relatively short and simple; their short phrases and simple poetic form provide great freedom for improvisation by the dancer; the singer, too, had considerable freedom in selecting stock verses for these tunes. Some of these tunes had more particular associations; for example, for the song “Buah Kawung” (“sugar palm fruit”), male dancers typically performed *penca silat* movements; the song “Cikeruhan” (“in the style of the village of Cikeruh”) accompanied movements meant to be *kocak* (amusing).

There are also a number of songs with complex, asymmetrical forms and special drum patterns, such as “Geboy” and “Paris Wado.” Dancers had to negotiate these songs’ structural peculiarities in order to coordinate their movements with goong strokes, and thus displayed their own expertise and cleverness. The repertory also includes set pieces, which help delineate the form of dance events, such as “Kembang Gadung,” which typically accompanies the *wawayangan* dance, and “Kidung” and “Erang,” which have already been mentioned.

Lyrics for ketuk tilu songs are usually in the light poetic forms of *wangsalan*, *sisindiran*, and *paparikan*. These texts tell of ordinary, every-

kamana si kalong hideung	where is the black bat
teu kadeuleu-deuleu manting	he can't be seen swinging
kamana si jangkung hideung	where is the tall dark guy
teu kadeuleu pulang anting	he can't be seen, wandering back and forth

Figure 4.3. *Ketuk tilu verse* (Somawijaya 1990)

day things, but are considered to be *disilibkeun* (indirectly spoken)—listeners interpret the mundane topics as metaphors for more profound or weighty matters. Ronggeng can call male guests up to the stage by nickname, or make a reference to a particular customer by choosing a text that evokes him.

The example in Figure 4.3 is in the *paparikan* form, in which each of the two couplets that form the verse address completely different subjects, but which nevertheless acquire a relationship through the use of parallel vocabulary and sounds. In this case, the first couplet describes a bat hanging upside down in the darkness. It sets a sinister tone—something slightly threatening (a bat) is close by, yet out of sight. The second couplet relates that one of the dancers has disappeared but remains, out of sight, beyond the pool of light cast by the *oncor*. The implication is that he is doing something sinister, or at the very least something outside the normal bounds of propriety.

Although *ketuk tilu* events followed a ritual protocol, the particular sequence of events was subject to the whims and desires of the men who attended them. It was common knowledge that these desires could tempt men to retreat into the darkness with the *ronggeng* of their choice and convert their ceremonial fertility rite into a flesh-and-blood sexual liaison. Sometimes transgressions of the protocol extended into the performance space as well. A popular ploy for some men was to “accidentally” kick over the oil lamp to extinguish it, and take the opportunity presented by the darkness to grope their partners.

Following each dance of the men with the *ronggeng* there was a second, men-only dance called *oray-orayan* (literally “moving like a snake,” it also is the name of a children’s game), in which the paying male dancer led the other men around the performance space in a sort of conga line. This men-only dance was meant to restore fellowship among the men and prevent arguments or fights among the men over *ronggeng*; in the past, at times such conflicts could turn ugly, and

could even become fatal (Salam Mulyadi, pers. comm., 6/15/99, 6/17/99; see also Herdiani 1996:45).

The various “bad” behaviors in which ketuk tilu fans indulged—drinking, showing off, carousing with women, and fighting with other men—are viewed as natural masculine behaviors. In everyday life, however, men are expected to suppress these urges; it is also considered a masculine attribute to control one’s bad behavior. A real man, then, lives a contradiction—he is randy and rowdy while simultaneously behaving with dignity and circumspection—both in the dance space and in real life.

Ketuk tilu events provided a space in which to explore these masculine contradictions as well as to ensure a successful rice-growing season. In fact, the two meanings became inextricably bound up with one another. While the men enjoyed their freedom to indulge in excessive behaviors, including uninhibited drinking, carousing, and fighting, the female singer-dancers, in a sense, took most of the blame for the men’s bad behavior. It was, after all, their beautiful appearance and beguiling voices, coupled with the animating rhythms of the drums, that were responsible for the men’s stepping outside the boundaries of propriety. Dance events with female singer-dancers and drumming provide a safe place for men to allow their true nature to percolate to the surface—an opportunity to prove that they are “real” men. On the dance floor, they demonstrate their masculinity whether they succumb to temptation or overcome it; if they succumb, they are “real” men, while if they overcome the singer-dancer’s temptations, they are powerful men. It is a win-win situation for men, who in real life all too often find themselves in less fortunate circumstances. In either case, dancing also provides them an opportunity for fellowship with their compatriots—to be men in the company of men.

It is within some people’s living memories that ketuk tilu-like events such as those described above were popular throughout the first part of the twentieth century. The ketuk tilu ensemble consisted of the three-ketuk gong chime, a hanging goong (played by the ketuk player), rebab, and gendang, plus the singing of the ronggeng. This minimal ensemble—with only three musicians—provided a stripped-down version of the four functional layers that characterize Indonesian gamelan music. The ketuk and goong provided a colotomic structure; the rebab and ronggeng based their elaborated versions of the melody on some unperformed basic outline, and the gendang player provided

the drumming layer. Track 9 of the CD that accompanies this book, the *ketuk tilu* tune “Sinur,” illustrates this texture.

*Ketuk tilu* events became less common after Indonesian independence (Sugiharwati 1980:2). Various forms of *ketuk tilu*-like events are purported to have been outlawed in the 1950s in some localities (Sugiharwati 1980:9; Azis and Barmaya 1983/84:5; Somawijaya 1990: 16; Amelia 1996:60; Sukarya 1997:3). This decline in *ketuk tilu*'s popularity in the twentieth century was probably precipitated by two significant changes in Sundanese (and Indonesian) life.

First was a burgeoning interest in a more orthodox approach to Islam. Although most of West Java had been Islamic since that religion first spread to Indonesia in the sixteenth century, the practice of Islam in West Java accommodated many pre-Islamic practices and did not greatly affect underlying political or social patterns (Anderson 1972: 58–59). In the late nineteenth century, some wealthy Sundanese were able to make the *haj* (pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca), observe how Islam was practiced in the Middle East, and encourage their Sundanese compatriots to adopt more stringent Islamic standards of moral behavior. Because *ketuk tilu* involved dancing that could be easily construed as lascivious, especially because it was common knowledge that the female performers might be willing to extend their ritual relationship with their male partners into actual sexual encounters, *ketuk tilu* events came to be seen as irredeemably immoral.

Second, some Indonesian nationalists became interested in forging an Indonesian nation out of the various islands and cultures then under Dutch rule. A key strategy in developing an Indonesian identity involved minimizing people's interest in local traditions and getting them to focus on an emerging pan-Indonesian culture, which was based in a large part on more internationally accepted political and social mores. Once again, lascivious dancing with overtones of prostitution did not fit well with these nationalist ideals.

Neither of these movements was anti-agriculture, although they did discourage the spiritual, goddess-centered approach to fertility represented by dance events. Their moral standards, however, definitely were at odds with an old-fashioned approach to masculinity in which bad behaviors were permitted—even encouraged—in the context of dance events.

As a result, the competing social values with which Sundanese men need to contend became even more complicated. On the one hand, it is their duty to ensure a fertile and successful growing season by danc-

ing with (and possibly having sex with) ronggeng, who are the ritual representatives of the rice goddess. Furthermore, Sundanese people understand carousing with women to be a “natural” predilection for men. On the other hand, these activities are cast as immoral under any circumstances from Islamic and nationalist points of view (Notosusanto and Weiss 1995:119), and while it is generally acknowledged that men are born with the urge to carouse, powerful men are expected to curb their natural urges.

At their heart, ketuk tilu events created a safe space to explore these contradictions through the interplay of three key elements: (1) female singer-dancers (ronggeng) and (2) the animating rhythm of drumming, both of which facilitate (3) free improvisatory dancing. In old-fashioned ketuk tilu performances, the three elements emerged one by one: first the drumming (in the *tatalu*), then the ronggeng (in the *wawayangan*); finally, the men join in with their free dancing. The ronggeng played the part of the goddess, which brings a sense of the sacred to the proceedings, mitigating any perceptions of wrongdoing. The drumming also relieves the men of any responsibility for their actions by coercing the men into action. Any bad behavior in the free dancing that results from these elements is thus socially acceptable.

These three elements—ronggeng, drumming, and free dancing—constitute a trenchant core of Sundanese custom that persists into the present, despite the pressures of orthodox Islam and Indonesian nationalism. Many of the developments in Sundanese music and dance in the twentieth century were motivated by attempts to reconcile all these paradoxical sets of values—to find some middle ground in which to be Islamic Sundanese nationalists.

### **Animating Dancers with Drumming**

Before examining some of these more recent developments in Sundanese music and dance, it is necessary to examine more deeply the relationship between dancing and drumming. A key feature of all Sundanese dancing is a close relationship between dance movements and particular drum patterns. It sometimes appears that there is a “cause-and-effect” relationship between dancing and drumming, although it is not always clear which is the cause and which is the effect. At times it seems as if a dancer’s body and limbs are encountering invisible barriers that make them stop suddenly; the drum patterns sound like the

noises these imaginary collisions create. Sundanese people associate similar sound effects to just about any kind of everyday movement. At the same time, however, it is a common belief that particular kinds of drum rhythms invite movement to go along with them—in effect, drum patterns animate the bodies of dancers, whether the bodies' owners are willing to dance or not.

Drummers and non-drummers alike learn drum patterns by associating spoken phrases with them as mnemonic devices; these phrases in turn come to suggest the movements they accompany. Dancers, when practicing or demonstrating, typically provide their own accompaniment in the absence of a drummer by singing onomatopoeic representations of drum patterns.

Ordinary people as well as musicians vocally imitate the sounds of drum patterns, and some Sundanese claim that Sundanese drums actually speak. Each of the variety of tones and timbres that a drummer can produce on the various drum heads using a variety of hand techniques suggests words or syllables. *Tepak kocak* (humorous drum patterns) suggest a certain movement by quite literally saying it. For example, one well-known drum pattern is heard to say “kadupak pingping, kadupak pingping, gulingkeun gulingkeun (goong),” which means in Sundanese “rub thighs, roll around (ending on the stroke of the goong).” The cause-and-effect relationship here is vague; it is unlikely that these particular drum sounds are specific enough to mimic unambiguously the words. Nevertheless, this linguistic interpretation is clear to most listeners, but only because they have heard it before.

It is worth noting that this particular drum pattern has some deliciously lewd implications. The drums not only animate dancers, but they sometimes tell them to engage in otherwise unacceptable behaviors. Sundanese dance drumming can provide a convenient excuse for indulging in questionable activities on the dance floor—“the drumming made me do it!”

There is a circularity inherent in this kind of joke—listeners need to be expecting the drum sounds to suggest movement, and at the same time such jokes reinforce the expectation that sounds and movements are related. An analogous circularity underlies the entire dance-drum relationship in Sundanese music—one must expect the drums to suggest movement, and at the same time coordinating movements to drum patterns reinforces the expectation.

Drum sounds and patterns have the power to evoke movement at many levels of organization. Individual drum sounds can suggest cer-



tain accented movements. Short patterns can suggest different types of walking, or ways of moving one's arms while standing. Imitations of drum sounds even characterize entire dance "genres"; the terms *jaipon-gan* and *dangdut*, for example, are generally acknowledged to be imitations of drum sounds (e.g., Hatch 1985:218; Tirasonjaya 1988:293; Soeharto 1992:27–28; Hardjana 1996:129; Soepandi, Sukanda et al. 1996:49). Each genre's distinctive rhythmic "groove" and the movement style associated with it is essentialized in a short, catchy vocal abbreviation of the drum accompaniment.

### *Sundanese Drums*

Three drum types are common in West Java: *dog-dog*, *terbang*, and *gendang*. Dog-dog are single-head conical drums hit with sticks or bare hands. *Terbang*, also called *rebana*, are single-head frame drums. *Gendang* (also called *kendang*) are double-head barrel-shaped drums. Dog-dog are associated with music and dance genres in which the musicians provide their own accompaniment while they parade or dance. *Terbang* are most often played in ensembles in which the musicians sit down. *Gendang* are associated with most other kinds of dancing.

Sundanese dance drummers usually perform with one large barrel-shaped drum, called *gendang indung* ("mother drum"), supplemented by one or more small drums, called *kulanter*, *gendang leutik*, or *ketipung*. Drums of both sizes share the same general appearance and construction. Each drum body is carved from a single piece of wood. The outside may be conical or barrel-shaped; the inside is hollowed out in an hourglass shape. Drum bodies are either stained and varnished or painted. Old drums are left with a worn finish despite the apparent preference for new and shiny appearances; visible wear indicates age and venerability, qualities that are prized (but rarely faked).

Each end of a drum is covered by a skin head that is wrapped around a rattan ring slightly larger than the end of the drum. The rings and heads are placed over the ends of the drums and laced onto the drum with a single long leather cord in a criss-cross pattern. Each of the resulting pairs of criss-crosses is joined by a small braided rattan ring which facilitates tightening and loosening head tension.

One of a drum's heads is typically slightly larger than the other. Sundanese drummers usually rest the smaller end of the drum on a stand to elevate the smaller head a foot or so off the floor; in the absence of a





*Figure 4.4. Usep playing gendang set up in a typical arrangement  
(Henry Spiller)*

stand, a drummer might use a pillow or his leg. Most drummers place their feet in cloth or string loops that are attached to the larger head of the gendang indung. This helps prevent the drum from moving and allows the drummer to change head tension, and thus the drum's pitch, with his heel.

The drummer places various kulanter within easy reach. At least one kulanter is placed upright on its larger head near the smaller head of the gendang indung. Some drummers prefer to tilt this kulanter slightly with a special piece of wood made for this purpose which is semipermanently tied to the drum, or by resting it on the tuning hammer or some other convenient object. The tilting affects the timbre of the drum slightly, since the unplayed head can vibrate sympathetically.

One, two, or three additional kulanter are placed opposite the drummer near the large head of the indung. These may be laid on their sides or placed upright. Usually the drummer hits only one head of each of these kulanter, either the larger or the smaller head. This basic arrangement pattern (see Figure 4.4) may be considered standard; however, each drummer exhibits personal idiosyncrasies of some kind. Although many drummers express preferences for one method or another, few drummers consider alternate arrangements incorrect.



Figure 4.5. *Four dog-dog players* (courtesy Michael Ewing)

### *Walking Patterns—Mincid*

Looking closely at one particular drum pattern provides some insight into the Sundanese dance-drum connection, especially if that drum pattern is actually produced by dancers who are playing drums. Several Sundanese ensembles include a cadre of hand-held conical drums called *dog-dog* (see Figure 4.5). In the comic entertainment form called *ogel* or *reog*, four performers provide their own accompaniment on *dog-dog* while they dance and tell jokes. Each performer plays a different sized *dog-dog*; specific interlocking patterns of *dog-dog* strokes are associated with specific movement patterns (Soepandi and Atmadibrata 1976:71–75). In this case, the *dog-dog* accompaniment also serves as a means for communication and signaling between the performers.

The Reog Mitra Siliwangi troupe from Bandung, for example, plays a variety of patterns on their four *dog-dog*. The drums are called (from smallest to largest) *tilingtít* (#1), *panempag* (#2), *jongjrong* (#3), and *bangbrang* (#4). The #1 player leads the tempo, rhythm, and movements; #2 is lower-pitched than #1, and is played on offbeats; #3 is lower-pitched than #2, and is played on onbeats; #4 is the lowest-pitched, acts as *gendang* and *goong*, and may play many variations

beat	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<i>talingtit</i> (#1)		•	•	•	•	•	•				•	•	•	•	•	
<i>panempag</i> (#2)		•		•		•		•		•		•		•		•
<i>jongjrong</i> (#3)	•				•				•				•			
<i>bangbrang</i> (#4)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	•		•	•	•	•		x

beat	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<i>talingtit</i> (#1)			•	•	•	•	•				•	•	•	•	•	
<i>panempag</i> (#2)		•		•		•		•		•		•		•		•
<i>jongjrong</i> (#3)	•				•				•				•			
<i>bangbrang</i> (#4)	x	•		•					•			•				

beat	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<i>talingtit</i> (#1)		•	•	•	•	•	•				•	•	•	•	•	
<i>panempag</i> (#2)		•		•		•		•		•		•		•		•
<i>jongjrong</i> (#3)	•				•				•				•			
<i>bangbrang</i> (#4)		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	•		•	•	•	•		x

Figure 4.6. Dog-dog walking pattern (after Solihin 1986:25)

(Solihin 1986:14–15). Figure 4.6 shows each dog-dog part for one of the group’s patterns.

This particular pattern is for the accompaniment of walking around. It is significant that the patterns played on the panempag and jongjrong (#2 and #3, respectively) are absolutely regular, evenly spaced strokes; but the two patterns are offset from one another so that they interlock. Because the two drums’ timbres and pitches are reasonably close to one another, and because their strokes occur sequentially, those listening tend to perceive both drum sounds as a single musical entity—as if they were coming from a single drum—and organize the sounds into groups of strokes. Thus, listeners hear a recurring drum motif—“high-low-high”—emerge; each iteration of the motive is separated by a moment of silence.

This motif can be thought of as mimicking the physical process of taking a step. The first higher-pitched sound represents the muscular impulse to lift the leg. The lower-pitched sound suggests the falling of the foot on the ground. The final higher-pitched sound recalls the re-

lease of muscle tension and the impulse to prepare to shift weight to the other leg. The pattern's offset from the music's accents suggests indefinite repetition of steps. The result is, at some level, the *sound* of a body walking (although not necessarily the sound a body *makes* when walking). The other parts (tilingtit and bangbrang, #1 and #4, respectively) decorate and vary this "walking" motive with syncopated rhythms and a wider variety of drum timbres.

Performance genres featuring dog-dog typically rely on interlocking figurations between the dog-dog drums and a division of labor among them to provide the drumming that animates the movement activity in the forms. The lead dog-dog player uses particular patterns to signal changes in tempo and choreography to the rest of the group. The repeated ostinato patterns echo and embody the movements coordinated with them.

In genres such as reog, each dancer provides a part of his own accompaniment. In ketuk tilu and other dance forms, however, a single gendang player provides all of the various drum sounds while the dancers concentrate on dancing. The set of gendang can produce a variety of pitches and timbres. Although it is a non-dancer who plays the gendang, the nature of the gendang parts is still dance-oriented; particular drum patterns suggest specific kinds of movements, and a specific drum pattern accentuates and supports each dance movement.

The dog-dog pattern described above, and others like it, have come to be associated with walking dance movements. Upon hearing such a pattern, a dancer is compelled to perform such walking movements in time with the drum rhythm. And, upon seeing a dancer perform walking movements, a drummer is obliged to accompany it with an appropriate drum pattern. Many gendang patterns, especially those that accompany walking movements, are reminiscent of interlocking dog-dog patterns; this makes sense considering that a kendang player has at his disposal a set of sound resources similar to that of four dancers playing dog-dog. A drummer can set up the "high-low-high" pattern by playing strokes on two different drums with one hand while providing the variable, syncopated patterns on yet another drumhead with his other hand.

*Mincid* is a Sundanese term that describes walking in a dance-like manner (Panitia Kamus 1969:314; Eringa 1984:501; Tamsyah, Purmasih et al. 1998:212), or "stepping—one step or in place" (Natapradja 1975:106, 108). *Keupat* means a swinging, swaying movement

where the hands and arms move back and forth while the feet step in opposition to the hands (Eringa 1984:398). These walking movements and the drum patterns that accompany them illustrate the circularity and ambiguity with regard to cause and effect. The drum patterns can be explained as *caused by* the walking movement—resulting from the very steps that the dancer-musicians take—or as actually *causing* the walking movements.

### Drumming in Ketuk Tilu

Mincid walking patterns are part of ketuk tilu drumming and dancing. Ketuk tilu pieces usually begin with a special section called *nyered* or *nyorong*, which does not vary from piece to piece. Some people even consider this section to be a separate piece (Somawijaya 1990:52). After *nyered*, the *lagu* (main song) begins; the repeated cycle may consist of one or more goong phrases. The drumming for the main song can be thought of as having two main sections. In the first, the drumming for each goong phrase of the *lagu* usually begins with a “stationary” pattern that persuades its hearers to remain poised but inactive, followed by a “moving” pattern that leads to the end of the goong phrase and obliges its hearers to perform active movements that end abruptly with the goong stroke. At some point, after a few repetitions of the main song’s cycle, there is a signal to change to the second primary section, the mincid section. The change may be initiated by one of the male dancers (in which case the drummer changes the drumming appropriately) or by the drummer (in which case the dancers follow suit). In mincid, walking patterns of the kind described previously are repeated without break. Although there may be special cadential figures leading to the goong strokes, there are no “stationary” patterns following the goong stroke, and no periods of inactivity. After several more repetitions of the main song, the pulse quickens a bit to the goong, and *nyered* is tacked on as an ending phrase or as a bridge to another main song. Participants do not dance to the *nyered* sections.

Each of the two primary sections has its own organization: For the first, moving toward goong strokes is the main organizing principle; in the second, it is walking continuously (mincid). For the moving phrases, dancers are (in principle) free to do whatever they like, as long as it fits the drumming. Fitting the drumming means moving dur-

ing a flurry of drumstrokes and striking a pose when the flurry ends. During this section, *ketuk tilu* dancers concentrate on moving their upper bodies and arms, with only occasional steps. Male dancers often strike poses while standing on one foot. If there are steps, they are typically large, and may include jumps. The male dancers usually move away from their *ronggeng* partners during the *goong* phrases, only to approach the *ronggeng* again as the *goong* phrase comes to an end. Most typically, the movement at the *goong* stroke involves stepping up to the *ronggeng* and pretending to kiss or touch her on the accented beat just before the *goong* stroke; the pose is held through the *goong* stroke, which gives it emphasis.

The *mincid* section, in contrast, concentrates on foot movements. Dancers usually perform some kind of stylized stepping for *mincid*, often with complicated patterns involving steps without weight shifts. Dancers often maintain one hand and arm position over the course of several steps. In these sections, if the drummer plays no cadential figure leading up to a *goong* stroke, the dancers continue their stepping right through the stroke, as if it were not there.

The conventions of *ketuk tilu* music and drumming make it easy to learn to dance. Nobody studies this kind of dancing; many men regard this free dancing as part of their natural abilities as men. Of course, they watch and imitate the dance movements of others they admire, and some men even admit to practicing dancing alone by listening to songs on cassettes or radio and dancing along. But learning to fit their movements to the drumming is relatively simple because the structure of the drumming itself is simple. There is considerable variety and freedom to do whatever sorts of movements one wants, as long as they fit the drumming and the song.

### **Aristocratic Men's Dancing: *Tayuban***

Men dancing in the company of *ronggeng* was not limited to the common people in villages; aristocratic men, too, danced with each other and with *ronggeng* at evening dance parties. For the same reasons that *ketuk tilu* fell out of fashion, namely changes in moral values that made the rowdier aspects of *ketuk tilu* dancers' behavior unacceptable, however, aristocratic men's dancing underwent some significant changes during the first part of the twentieth century. These changes

set the stage for many of the innovations in Sundanese presentational dance in the late twentieth century and into the present.

The aristocratic class, called the *kaum menak*, led a lifestyle significantly different from that of Sundanese commoners. For them, the performing arts were an important symbol of status and differentiation because they provided opportunities for displays of wealth and ostentation. The upper class took pains to differentiate their artistic productions from those of the commoners. They held their events in large covered porch areas, rather than outdoors, and danced to the accompaniment of a full gamelan salendro ensemble rather than the minimalist ketuk tilu ensemble. Aristocratic dancers developed rich movement vocabularies and complex choreographies.

While differences of scale and protocol are apparent between upper- and lower-class dance events in the nineteenth-century descriptions, it is not until the late nineteenth century that people began to apply different names to these variants of Sundanese men's social dance; the aristocratic version came to be called *ibing tayub* or *tayuban*. Although the trappings of upper- and lower-class dance parties were different, it seems likely that the same female singer-dancers were hired to perform at both. The male guests paid the *ronggeng*, often in a very public manner—handing them money, placing it in a special bowl, or slipping it into their clothing. In the aristocratic parties, the men typically danced one at a time, often in the order of their status and rank. Often, one of the female performers, the host, or the previous dancer chose the next male dancer by presenting him with a dance scarf. Once the chosen man was dancing, others could join in after asking and receiving permission from him. Although *tayuban* had much in common with ketuk tilu, its roots in any agricultural rituals are much more obscure. While ketuk tilu celebrated masculinity as a metaphor for agricultural fertility, *tayuban* was about a different kind of masculinity: establishing a man's rank and status relative to the other aristocrats in attendance.

The professional female singer-dancers were the only women dancing at the aristocratic events. Wives and daughters attended the parties, but did not dance; rather, they observed the spectacle of their husbands, fathers, and sons dancing with one another and with the *ronggeng*. While the female audience members clearly enjoyed watching as the men jockeyed for status, sometimes they became jealous if their husbands crossed some ill-defined line of propriety. At some

point in the evening, the female (and foreign) guests would always leave, and the parties reputedly became increasingly wild (Dyck 1922:65; Brandts-Buys n.d.).

It is often difficult for twenty-first-century readers to understand how dancing skills could acquire so much importance. Since the fall of the Sundanese Pajajaran kingdom in the sixteenth century, the Priangan was part of non-Sundanese political units that delegated authority to govern to the existing Sundanese aristocracy. These aristocrats' authority depended at least partly on their ability to maintain a perception that they were somehow different from and better than their rank-and-file subjects, and therefore worthy to govern; one means to achieve this perception was to cultivate manners and practices—etiquette—that distinguished them from the common people and legitimated their right to rule. (Kartodirdjo 1982:188).

In 1871, the Dutch demoted the Sundanese *bupati* (Sujana 1993: 49)—they were relieved of many of their hereditary governing responsibilities, some of which were shifted to the local Dutch officials while the rest were assigned to native bureaucrats. While there was no requirement that these bureaucrats have any aristocratic blood, because of their education and status, aristocrats filled many of the new positions, and thus these new bureaucratic positions once again became associated with the existing noble class. However, the Dutch also instituted merit-based promotion within the bureaucracy. Membership in the aristocracy became something neither completely hereditary, nor completely merit-based. There was no longer any official privilege attached to a noble birth; status and respectability could be, and needed to be, acquired and maintained.

It was then possible for someone of common birth to break into and advance among the ranks of the aristocracy. An ambitious fellow could get himself apprenticed at a young age to an aristocratic household or *kabupaten*, and attempt to win the favor of the master. The candidate did menial tasks and learned office skills, but also learned how to fit into high society. Acceptance and approval in such circles could provide an entry into the bureaucracy as well as the means to advance (Sutherland 1979:32).

When blood alone no longer determines place in society, other factors become more important. Aristocrats—as well as aspirants to aristocracy—developed even more elaborate etiquette skills. The publication of a number of Sundanese etiquette books in the early twentieth



century attests both to the importance of etiquette among the kaum menak as well as the possibility for upward mobility by those who master the intricacies of etiquette, which according to at least one of those books (the 1908 *Tatakrama Oerang Soenda*—Sundanese People's Etiquette, by D. K. Ardiwinata), involved three aspects: language, dress, and behavior (Lubis 1998:173).

To address the first aspect, aristocrats cultivated different vocabularies (levels) of the Sundanese language. A speaker's choice of language level situated him or her in relationship to others—a person quite literally spoke “up” or “down” to other people. People of lower rank were obliged to use deferential language when speaking to their superiors, creating a palpable distance between them. People of higher rank were empowered to use cruder vocabulary when speaking to their subordinates. Using these speech levels—and getting away with it—provided a means to quite literally speak one's rank and status.

Details of dress, too, provided opportunities to situate one's self within aristocratic society; by wearing the appropriate batik patterns, styles of clothing, and jewelry and ornaments, it possible to know at a glance somebody's rank and status. Aristocratic men traditionally wore a *kain batik* (wrapped batik skirt), a shirt and/or jacket of various different styles and cuts, and a headcloth or covering of some sort. The quality and pattern of the batik cloth bespoke a man's rank and taste; the details of how he pleated the ends and wrapped and wore the cloth were also markers of his good breeding. Different kinds of jackets went in and out of style, and men needed both money and taste to keep up with trends. Watches, watch chains, and other jewelry were similarly indexes of a man's wealth, status, and good taste.

The final dimension of etiquette was careful attention to one's behavior, or more specifically, one's bodily deportment. The etiquette of West Javanese aristocrats created distance between those affecting upper-class mannerisms and those of lower status (Lubis 1998:172). In short: Becoming an aristocrat involved learning to *move* as an aristocrat.

The *sembah* gesture is an example. In this gesture of greeting, one puts one's hands together as if praying and holds them in front of one's face. Sembah was used in all sorts of situations, such as greeting somebody or receiving something. Ardiwinata, the author of the aforementioned etiquette book, compared the sembah gesture to the “commas and semicolons in a literary work or goong strokes in gamelan music” (Lubis 1998:174); in other words, its correct usage punctuated



Figure 4.7.  
Tayuban dancer wearing  
aristocratic *pakaian adat*  
(Henry Spiller)

graceful behavior and provided a sense of completeness to a man's deportment. Knowing how and when to *sembah* was a mark of bodily eloquence and style.

Just as the well-dressed aristocrat's clothing eventually became a sort of dance costume for aristocratic dance (see Figure 4.7), the dance gestures of aristocratic men's dancing doubtless developed as an extension of this bodily etiquette. Many etiquette gestures were incorporated into *tayuban* dancing, including *sembah*, *sila* (sitting cross-legged), various styles of walking respectfully, and *ngampil* (carrying a symbolic object solemnly) (Lubis 1998:173). But, even more importantly, dance events provided a forum in which men could develop and display their skill at looking and moving like an aristocrat.

In fact, being good at dancing became a requirement (Durban Ardjo 1998:167; Lubis 1998:246). Men cultivated their skill at dancing, and guarded their reputations as dancers, as part and parcel of the business of being manly in an aristocratic way. The highest-ranking bupati often had a *kostim* (dance character and song) that they preferred to dance in *tayuban*. There were grave supernatural consequences for somebody who usurped somebody else's *kostim* without permission.

Upward mobility also required, at some level, the approval of the Dutch overlords. The Sundanese upper classes also adopted things European (as they had adopted things Javanese earlier) during the pe-

riod around 1900, including drinking whisky and playing cards (Sutherland 1979:43). Pressures of upper-class European morals, which frowned on overt dalliances with women of ill repute, combined with similar pressures from increasingly orthodox Muslims, led some aristocrats to “clean up” their tayuban events. Most histories credit the Sumedang aristocrat R. Gandakusumah (a.k.a. Aom Doyot; *Aom* is a title bestowed on the son of a bupati) with modifying tayuban etiquette in several significant ways—including forbidding the ronggeng to stand and dance and relegating them to the role of singer only (Soepandi and Atmadibrata 1976:84). Other reformers eliminated the consumption of alcoholic drinks as well. Inconveniently for these reformers, the words *tayub* and *tayuban* themselves probably come from an old Javanese word “*anayub*” (Sumarsam 1995:35, 27 fn. 43), which meant to drink a fermented beverage (Zoetmulder, Robson et al. 1995:1063). Some reformers even came up with new *kirata* (retroactive acronymic etymologies) to eliminate this association with alcohol use, such as *mataya* (dance) plus *guyub* (together), and *menata* (put in order) *paguyuban* (togetherness); these interpretations put the fellowship aspect of *tayuban* dancing into the foreground while attempting to cover up *tayuban*’s association with drinking and other bad behaviors (Sujana 1993:24–25).

Faced with the prospect of being judged on their dancing skills, and deprived of erotic spectacle from the ronggeng, participating men turned to enhancing their own spectacle. One particularly rich resource in the cultivation of increasingly complex dancing was *topeng Cirebon*. As described in Chapter Two, this village theater form featured a solo dancer portraying a variety of characters in an all-day performance. Sundanese dance enthusiasts were intrigued by Cirebonese dance, possibly because its sophisticated movement repertory, characterization, and complex formal structures all provided fresh ways to distinguish an individual’s dancing from that of the others. A number of Cirebonese dalang *topeng* capitalized on this interest and made regular trips to the Sundanese parts of West Java. Sundanese dance enthusiasts observed and studied elements of *topeng* with these visiting dancers and enriched their own dancing with elements of form, style, and gesture from *topeng*.

Dancing became a competitive activity during this period. Competitions for male dancers, called *konkurs* (from the Dutch term *concours*, meaning competition), were popular in the early part of the twentieth

century (Atmadibrata 1998:3). Competitions provided a context in which standards of dancing excellence were developed and extended. Individuals who excelled at improvisational dancing were asked to teach others their skills, resulting in the founding of organizations devoted to dancing. Members of the clubs studied with these masters and competed in the *konkurs*.

This “evolved” form of *tayuban* dancing—a single man dancing alone, without a *ronggeng* partner, exhibiting his skill with expanded forms and large movement vocabulary from *topeng Cirebon*—came to be known as *ibing keurseus* because its fans learned to dance by studying dancing systematically in dance courses. “Ibing” is the high Sundanese word for dancing, while “*keurseus*” comes from the Dutch word “*cur-sus*,” meaning “course of study.” This new name also further disassociated men’s dancing from the use of alcohol.

*Ibing keurseus* rapidly gained popularity among the Sundanese for several reasons. Its aristocratic connotations and its reputation as a means for social advancement encouraged its study by ambitious young people. Beginning in the 1930s, several academic schools began to offer instruction in *ibing keurseus* (Sujana 1993:99). The dance clubs had developed systematic teaching methods which were easily transferable to academic settings. The very name “*ibing keurseus*,” with its Dutch origins and vaguely systematic and “scientific” ring, gave the emerging dance genre an aura of upward mobility and modernity adaptable to both aristocratic *and* democratic models of society. In keeping with the ideals of a wider Indonesian identity, some people began to call the dance genre *tari kursus*—the Indonesian-language translation of the Sundanese phrase *ibing keurseus*.

Eventually, *tari kursus* became the base on which what is now called Sundanese classical dance (*tari klasik*) was built. It provided a repertory of dance movements, with specific accompanying drum patterns, and a formal structure for developing dance pieces. It even provided a model for costumes. It might be more difficult to learn and perform than *ketuk tilu* or *tayub* dancing, but it was more interesting to watch. Thus, over the course of about fifty years, aristocratic men’s improvisational dance morphed from an improvised, social dance form into a kind of presentational dance, and became completely decoupled from the context of the participatory dance events from which it sprang.

*Tari kursus* dances, divested of *tayuban*’s seamier elements and upgraded to be presentational dances, could be shown off to non-

Sundanese as examples of high Sundanese art, alongside similar classical dances from Central Java and Bali, as expressions of the Indonesian nation's motto *Bhinneka tunggal ika* (Old Javanese for "unity in diversity"). Although it is clear that the form, style, and gestures of modern Sundanese classical dance are firmly rooted in men's improvisational dance, differences in context and meaning are profound. The model of paying admission and sitting to watch a performance is fundamentally different from the more established Sundanese ways of experiencing performing arts in the context of a family celebration.

Sundanese men's improvisational dance—both *ketuk tilu* and *tayuban*—provided men with an opportunity to establish their masculine identities. Whether one was a farmer or an aristocrat, dancing well and dancing cleverly, without crossing the lines of bad taste or impropriety or seeming too flamboyant or proud, provided a way to enhance a man's status in the sight of other men and in the sight of any women who might be observing. Because of the ritual connotations of men's dance events—the female singer-dancer's association with the rice goddess and of the men's obligation to ensure agricultural fertility by interacting erotically with the female performers—dance events also involved behaviors that generally were frowned upon, such as drinking and womanizing. Establishing a masculine identity, then, involves doing these contradictory activities at the same time through the medium of dance movements. Although negotiating the twists and turns of Sundanese masculinity was a treacherous undertaking, the mechanics of dancing in *ketuk tilu* and *tayuban* were relatively easy. Anybody familiar with the drum patterns and the structure of the music could come up with appropriate dance movements. The new presentational Sundanese dances, however, were perceived to be quite difficult to learn; they require special training and courses and specialized knowledge, not to mention special costumes.

### Modern Men's Dancing

In the 1960s and 1970s, *ketuk tilu* performances were increasingly rare, but performances called "tayuban" were popular at Sundanese *hajat* (life-cycle event celebrations) among middle-class, non-aristocratic, urban Sundanese. The *hajat* host needed to hire a gamelan and invite dancers as guests. The guest dancers received special invitations indicating that they would be called upon to dance, so that they would

come prepared to dance and would dress appropriately (i.e., in *pakaian adat*—the kain batik, jacket, and headcloth worn by aristocrats, which were by that time obsolete for most occasions).

Several issues with these tayuban performances contributed to their losing popularity. For one thing, the “feudal” overtones of the event were very apparent; tayuban, after all, was most closely associated with the aristocratic class, and this association was reinforced by the costumes worn by the dancers. By the 1960s, Indonesians were increasingly aware that the existence of an aristocratic class was not compatible with the nation’s democratic ideals. Another reason was that the competence required to dance tayuban—all the specialized movements, the specific order of movements, and how to fit the movements into musical structures—had become esoteric knowledge. Most of the invited dancers performed choreographed tari kursus dances, further intimidating the average participant because of the specialized knowledge and technique required to perform them. In other words, the pressures that had brought about the “cleaning up” of tayuban resulted in a populace that was no longer interested in watching—much less performing—tari kursus.

Ketuk tilu, too, is rarely encountered any more in Priangan, but there are a couple of troupes that still perform occasionally. One group performs every other week in the Bandung Zoo; their show is billed as a “cultural performance,” the goal of which is to preserve ketuk tilu as a cultural artifact and educate Zoo visitors about this old-fashioned style of Sundanese dancing. The ronggeng are, for the most part, very old, as are the male dancers. Although the audience is encouraged to participate, few spectators join in the ketuk tilu dancing. The Zoo audiences are aware that ketuk tilu is an old form of Sundanese folk art which involves ronggeng and amateur male dancers, but they are not acquainted with the particulars of ketuk tilu music and dance. The Zoo performances are called *ketuk tilu buhun*; *buhun* means “ancient” and thus reinforces this distance. For Bandung residents, then, ketuk tilu and tayuban have entered into the realm of esoteric folklore.

### Bajidoran

Although ketuk tilu and tayuban fell out of favor in the Priangan, dancing with ronggeng has remained popular in some parts of West Java. The area around the cities of Karawang and Subang (north of

Bandung) are especially well known for dance events involving professional female singers and dancers facilitating the participation of men from the audience. In many surface details, these modern dance events do not much resemble the austere, reconstructed versions of *ketuk tilu* as performed in the Bandung Zoo or *tayuban* at *hajat*. From a broader perspective, however, modern men's dancing in Karawang and Subang has much in common with *ketuk tilu* and *tayuban*.

In the earlier part of the twentieth century, *ketuk tilu* troupes are reported to have followed *dalang* around to steal their audiences; some people speculate that the assimilation of the *ronggeng* into *wayang* performance practice as the *pasinden* (seated, non-dancing female singer) was a strategy on the part of *wayang golek dalang* to overcome their newfound competition by assimilating it. More recently, as *ketuk tilu* events became difficult to find, fans starting going to *wayang golek* performances and asking the *pasinden* to dance for them. The *pasinden* became the focus of the performance, often at the expense of the *wayang's* ostensive main focus, that is, the storytelling. *Dalang Tjejtjep Supriadi* from Karawang describes how some *dalang* encouraged this practice because it contributed to their own popularity (Suganda 1996), but other *dalang* sought to impose standards on *wayang* performance that would prohibit dancing by female performers (cf. Weintraub 1997:176–182). In response, some female performers began performing in a new kind of group, which presented music drawn from *wayang* and *ketuk tilu* repertoires for listening and dancing (Dahlan 1996:2, 34–35).

These performances were at first called *kliningan*. In the past, *kliningan* referred to a small ensemble for accompanying *kawih* singing (see Hermantoro 1991). *Klining*, *kilining*, or *kilinding* is an obsolete instrument resembling a Central Javanese *gender* (Soepandi 1985:111). A newer name for these performances is *bajidoran*, because the male fans who come to the performances came to be called *bajidor*. In Subang and Karawang, this term has been in use to describe male dancers since the 1950s (Junengsih 1997:15). Mas Nanu Muda provides a kirata for the word—**barisan jiwa doraka** (a row of sinners)—and relates that it was originally used as a joke among *bajidor* themselves, but eventually came to be applied to the entire musical genre (see also Suganda 1998; Muda 1999:14). There are a number of variants of this kirata, including **barisan jiwa durhaka** (row of rebels) (Suganda 1996) and **bajingan doraka** (sinful, evil men; *bajing* is a fly-



ing squirrel, which has approximately the same meaning as the American slang “rat” when applied to a man). Mas Nana Munajat Dahlan corroborates his brother Nanu’s explanation, but supplements it with a second, completely different kirata for *bajidoran*: **banjet**, **tanji**, dan **bobodoran** (*banjet* is a dance/theater form; *tanji* refers to Sundanese music performed on Western brass instruments, and *bobodoran* suggests humorous movement—clowning around). He explains that this kirata accounts for the similarities of *bajidoran* to *banjet* and *tanji* with regard to the dance, music, and drum patterns, as well as the humor that pervades *bajidor* events (Dahlan 1996:5). Other possible sources for the term *bajidor* might include the Portuguese *bailador* (dancer) and the Hindu *bayadere* (*devadasi*, female temple dancers).

What most of these tales about the origin of the terms *bajidor* and *bajidoran* have in common is that they capture the free masculine energy that characterizes the events. The story of the development of *bajidoran* demonstrates how persistent the idea of men’s free dancing facilitated by *ronggeng* and drumming remains in the Sundanese imagination despite the pressures of conflicting value systems. For various reasons, *ketuk tilu* and *tayuban* dancing fell out of favor; but the same underlying pattern of social relationships and meanings found an outlet in other forms of music and dance. Although *ketuk tilu* and *tayuban* are for most intents and purposes extinct, *kliningan/bajidoran* groups are thriving in northern West Java; there are more than 100 groups in the Subang area alone (Dahlan 1996:39; Junengsih 1997:6), and perhaps as many as 1000 female singer-dancers around Subang and Karawang (Suganda 1998).

The groups in Subang typically include ten to fifteen female singer-dancers called *sinden*, accompanied by a large gamelan *salendro*, including several *gendang* players, performing on a very high (approximately five feet above the ground) stage. The *bajidor* often show up to any performance that features their favorite *sinden*. The performance sponsors do not necessarily know the individual *bajidor* personally, but they welcome their attendance and even provide them with alcoholic drinks (which the regular guests do not receive) to encourage them to dance. To avoid the appearance of impropriety, however, the men dance on the ground in front of the high stage, which provides them only limited opportunities for physical contact with the *sinden* (see Figure 4.8).

One form of physical interaction is called *egot*. A *bajidor* stands in front of the stage, sometimes on a wooden box placed there for this





Figure 4.8. *Bajidor dance below the stage where sinden dance under colorful lights*  
(Henry Spiller)

purpose, and his chosen *sinden* kneels in front of him. They join hands and swing them back and forth in time to the music. The *sinden* expect the *bajidor* to tip them generously and often. After a few minutes of *egot*, the *sinden* breaks contact, and will not reengage until the *bajidor* tips her.

Like *ketuk tilu*, *bajidor* dancing requires only a basic understanding of a few musical conventions and the mastery of a few simple dance drumming patterns. Once again, there are two main grooves associated with *bajidor* dancing: standing/moving patterns and walking patterns. Whereas *ketuk tilu* involves several different standing/moving patterns, some of which are associated with special phrases in particular songs, most of the stationary patterns in *bajidoran* are based on a single framework, called (when it is given a name at all) *bubukaan* (“opening”) or *pola ibing* (“dance pattern”). Once again, the walking patterns are called *mincid*. A typical *bajidoran* song alternates between these two grooves.

The gamelan accompaniment for *bajidoran* dancing is usually a *lagu alit*—those “small pieces” described in Chapter Three in which the musicians base their parts on a simple sequence of pillar pitches that occur at regular time intervals. Usually the pieces are performed in *dua*

	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8
													pang		pak

	9		10		11		12		13		14		15		16
ter	pak	blang	pak	blang	pak	ting		pak		ting	pong			bong	dut

Figure 4.9. *Bajidoran pola ibing: bukaan*

*wilet* (“two wilet”—a rhythmic treatment that specifies how much time there is between pillar pitches; see Chapter Three). The pola ibing pattern divides each goong phrase into several parts; each part involves a frenetic flurry of drumming, followed by a complete stop of activity (and silence from the drums). The pola ibing is an important foundation of jaipongan as well; these patterns can be heard on Track 10 (“Lindeuk Japati”) of the CD that accompanies this book.

The first drum phrase in the pola ibing is the opening movement, called *bukaan*; its end coincides with the goong phrase’s first pillar pitch. This phrase is notated in Figure 4.9 using the drum syllables that a drummer or dancer might sing to represent the drum pattern; the reader can produce an approximation of what the pattern sounds like by setting an even beat (referring to the beat numbers above the drum syllables) and singing the syllables indicated in the boxes in time with the rhythm. The ‘ng’ sounds at the end of syllables suggest a ringing drum sound, while the ‘k’ sounds correspond to sharp, slapped drum sounds. A ‘p’ or ‘t’ at the beginning of the syllable suggests a higher pitch, while a ‘b’ or ‘d’ sound suggests a lower pitch. Extra consonants (‘l’ or ‘r’) inserted after the initial sound suggests a drum roll or flam. Notice that the drum is silent for the first seven beats of the pattern; there is then a flurry of activity culminating with the rising drum figure “bang-dut.”

The next phrase also begins with a seven-beat stretch of silence, followed by some stepping movements. This pattern is called *jalak pengkor* (lame bird) because it suggests foot movements that limp along, spending more time on one foot than the other. The pattern ends with the same rising figure that ends the bukaan flurry. The syllables for *jalak pengkor* are illustrated in Figure 4.10.

A moment of silence follows *jalak pengkor*, but not as long as the moment that followed the bukaan movement. The next flurry of activity, called *capang* (“sticking out sideways with upward points”), begins

	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8
															blang

	9		10		11		12		13		14		15		16
pak		pak	blang	pak		pak	tupak			tung	ping	baba	bang	bang	dut

Figure 4.10. *Bajidoran pola ibing: jalak pengkor*

with the fourth beat of the phrase and is characterized by triplets—evenly spacing three drumstrokes over the time usually allotted to four—which give the phrase a feeling of building tension. The *capang* flurry is played twice during the third phrase, as illustrated in Figure 4.11.

	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8
							dong	pak	ting	tung	pong	bang			pak

	9		10		11		12		13		14		15		16
							dong	pak	ting	tung	pong	bang			pak

Figure 4.11. *Bajidoran pola ibing: capang*

All of the tension that has been built up by the juxtaposition of flurries of activity and silence and the triplets will be released in the last phrase. The final flurry of activity, *ngala genah* (“look for something delicious”), is prepared by a short movement called *cindek* (“inevitable”) or *koma* (“comma”), as illustrated in Figure 4.12. *Ngala genah* ends with a strong accent one beat before the goong stroke; the goong stroke itself is met with silence and stillness.

	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8
		tung	ping	ber	pak	pak	bang								dut

	9		10		11		12		13		14		15		16
ting	pong		dut	ting	pong	ber	pak			tung	ping	dong	BAP		(G)

Figure 4.12. *Bajidoran pola ibing: cindek and ngala genah*

Bajidor dancers are free to translate these drum patterns into movement however they wish. Very often the movements they choose are funny; sometimes, but not always, the humor is intentional. I have seen a dancer move to the pola ibing looking like the movie version of Frankenstein's monster—never bending his elbows or knees, and keeping his gaze blindly straight ahead. Another bajidor dancer has earned a certain measure of fame by moving only his facial muscles, following the dictates of the drum flurries by making ridiculous grimaces in time to the patterns. For improvised dance, the aesthetic goal is to dance with freedom—to appear unconstrained by conventions or restrictions. Dancers do attempt to synchronize their movements with drum patterns, but this is not regarded as a restriction so much as an axiomatic, defining characteristic of dance.

There are some general tendencies in the choices that most men make for the various flurries in the pola ibing. Men tend to adopt a stance in preparation for the first flurry (*bukaan*). This stance, called *adeg-adeg* (support post; see Figure 4.13), involves placing one foot back and one foot forward (both turned out about 45 degrees from center), with the back knee bent and taking most of the body's weight. The dancer's trunk leans back a bit, his gaze is downcast, and his arms are relaxed. When the *bukaan* drum flurry begins, the dancer gestures with his head, arms, and torso, leaving his feet on the ground. He may change directions, and most of the gestures could be characterized as floating and sustained. At the end of the flurry, when the drummer performs the characteristic rising drum motive (*bang-dut*), there is an abrupt change; the dancer usually makes some sort of a dabbing or punching gesture, after which he stops moving so that his final position becomes a pose. Dancers typically do not move during the times when the drum is silent. Most men do not even hold a pose for these periods; instead, they stop dancing and just stand there until the next flurry of activity begins.

Jalak pengkor and capang involve similar movements (although jalak pengkor typically involves stepping as well). The rising drum motive at the end of each flurry inspires an abrupt change in dance energy—a dramatic gesture followed by a pose. The dramatic stop at the end of the ngala genah cadential pattern inspires a similar, but usually more dramatic, change in energy flow. In contrast to the previous abrupt changes, the shape change of ngala genah movements are also



*Figure 4.13. Abdul Rozak (dancing with ronggeng Rakmi) in adeg-adeg pose (Henry Spiller)*

characterized by a pronounced sinking quality, giving it more of a feeling of finality.

The attraction of dancing might be summed up in the phrase *ngala genah* (or *ala genah*). In Sundanese, *ala* or *ngala* means “to pick (as fruit)” or “to look for”; *genah* means “delicious” or “pleasing.” *Ala genah* refers to the final gesture of the *pola ibing*, specifically to the abrupt stop, accentuated by a loud drumstroke (*bap*), that comes just one beat before the stroke of the goong. Dancer and choreographer Mas Nanu Muda explains that the pleasing part of *ngala genah* is getting back in sync together with other dancers at that particular point in a dance. He said that it is nice to dance according to one’s own wishes during the lively drumming that leads up to the goong stroke, but that coming back together at the point where the drumming stops before the goong stroke is especially satisfying.

In *bajidor* dancing, the *pola ibing* section is repeated several times before the musicians switch to the second groove—*mincid*. For *mincid*, most men match their foot movements to the drumming, stepping in some patterned way (for example, step-left/close/step-right/close). Depending on their personalities and mood, they might travel only slightly (e.g., back and forth in a “slot”) or else move aggressively around the dance arena. The stepping is continuous, providing a sig-

nificant contrast with the alternation between flurries of activity and stillness that characterize the pola ibing section. Dancers usually supplement their foot movements with head, arm, and torso gestures. Drum cadential figures (and dance movements) that lead to goong strokes in mincid are similar to ngala genah in the pola ibing.

In the 1990s, some bajidoran groups began to include a third rhythmic groove as well—an extremely fast and agitated mincid-like pattern called *triping*. Although the drumming for *triping* is quite frenetic, most men dance to it rather slowly, swaying their heads from side to side and stepping somewhat erratically. The groove is said to mimic the effects of the drug Ecstasy, with its intense mental acuity and overall feeling of well-being. The name *triping* is derived from the English term “tripping.”

The dancers consider themselves free to dance however they want; the most pleasurable part of dancing for them, however, is the moment when they stop dancing freely and pause for a moment, in unison, and shift their focus from the internal to the external. These pauses in the first groove, of which ngala genah is perhaps the most dramatic example, suggest a sort of checking in with the rest of the dancers—interrupting the introspective, personal sojourn that is improvisational dance to make sure that everybody else is still in the same groove. The dancers’ cherished freedom is, in effect, limited quite frequently by these checks—much as their personal freedom to act as they please is held in check by the strictures of society and the limits of good taste. The second groove, mincid, is blissfully free of these reality checks, and the dancers are given the opportunity to really let loose; because they are constantly moving according to the drums, however, once again their perceived freedom is reined in by convention. The familiar framework of female singer-dancer and animating drumming enables this illusion of total freedom in bajidoran.

### Jaipongan

Bajidor dancing may be a popular diversion for lower-class men in some parts of West Java, but such dancing still is held in low esteem by upwardly mobile Sundanese. While there are many aspects of such events that raise eyebrows, including the use of alcohol and the men’s predilection toward uninhibited behaviors, most of the disapproval is focused on the female singer-dancers. They are seen to capsulize every-

thing that is immoral about men's dancing because it is they, people believe, who lead the men into temptation.

Yet, at the same time, even upwardly mobile Sundanese enjoy the opportunity to perform the contradictions of Sundanese masculinity and the fellowship of men that "free" dancing provides. It is no simple matter to change a culture's notions about masculinity, especially when they have been continuously reinforced for centuries by the durable three-part framework of female singer-dancers, animating drumming, and free dancing in a variety of dance events. Once again, it is the female singer-dancers who most reliably symbolize these associations with men's dance events. Give them too big a role, and the music becomes sleazy; push them too far into the background, and the music becomes uninteresting.

*Jaipongan*, a music and dance form that became popular in West Java in the late 1970s, seemed to strike exactly the right balance with regard to the female singer-dancer's role. By maintaining all that was up-to-date and exciting about *bajidor* music and dancing, and by keeping female performers in the foreground but sanitizing their roles by emphasizing their status as star performers, *jaipongan* forged common ground between the participational nature of traditional Sundanese men's dance events and the more modern presentational dance forms pioneered with *tari kursus*.

A Bandung-based choreographer and record producer named Gugum Gumbira Tirasondjaja claims to have invented *jaipongan* in the 1970s. As a young man, he says, he was attracted to popular music from the United States and Europe. He was inspired, however, to look beyond imported rock and roll to indigenous Sundanese forms because of an admonition by Indonesia's first president, Sukarno, to eschew foreign influences and look to Indonesian roots for contemporary expressions (Yampolsky 1987; Broughton, Ellingham et al. 1994:428). Gugum's account of *jaipongan*'s genesis also suggests that he was dissatisfied with the approach to masculinity expressed in presentational dances such as *tari kursus*; the virility and authenticity he perceived in rock and roll were among the qualities that made it attractive. Douglas Myers paraphrases Gugum's thoughts:

[Gugum] was a young and virile man. He wanted to move. He wanted to express his vigour. Within the range of cultural dances available to him there was nothing which he felt allowed him to express what he wanted

to say. The dances were too slow and constrained to allow the movements of the impetuous young man (Myers 1992:45).

Gugum found what he was looking for in the bajidoran/kliningan music of Subang and Karawang. One particularly famous drummer from Karawang named Suwanda caught Gugum's attention, perhaps because his spectacular virtuosity—his playing was almost superhumanly loud and fast—captured the qualities that Gugum was seeking.

Gugum's first jaipongan pieces are masterful combinations of a variety of existing Sundanese music and dance elements. Many of the characteristic drum pattern sequences come from Karawang-style music and dance. The dance movements for his staged choreographies were drawn from a variety of sources, including *penca silat* (Sundanese martial arts). The first jaipongan hits, such as "Oray Welang," were adaptations of songs from the ketuk tilu repertory.

It is quite unlikely that Gugum's somewhat self-aggrandizing account of the invention of jaipongan is completely true; other creative forces were instrumental in innovating and popularizing jaipongan. While it is true that Sukarno disapproved of Western popular music, and some government officials banned rock'n'roll from Indonesian radio from the late 1950s until Sukarno's fall in 1965 (Lockard 1998:77), that was more than a decade before the beginnings of jaipongan in the late 1970s. And several other prominent musicians and dancers contributed important ideas and materials to the development of jaipongan, notably the late Nandang Barmaya. One of the first major public presentations of jaipongan was developed for a presentation at the Third Asian Arts Festival in Hong Kong in 1978; Gugum refined and rehearsed what was then known only as *ketuk tilu perkembangan* (developed ketuk tilu) with a number of artists, including Nandang and singer/dancer Tati Saleh.

The contribution of the drummer Suwanda, whose brilliant playing leaps out of the speakers for most of the original jaipongan hits and was an enormous part of their appeal, should not be underestimated. The name "jaipongan" itself usually is connected to the sound of drumming. Although "pong" is a common vocalization of drum sound, the syllable "jai" is not. One story is that the phrase "jaipong" was borrowed from a comedian who deliberately garbled dance-drumming syllables for comic effect. Some people have suggested that the word "jai" is not an imitation of drum syllables at all, but rather the name of a



Karawang artist. A few people even claim it is a Chinese word. In any case, Gugum used the new name, and it did not take long for it to eclipse the tongue-twisting term *ketuk tilu perkembangan*.

Gugum's role in jaipongan's creation and popularization is significant, and it is not limited to dancing and choreography; his artistic vision and business acumen as a recording producer were instrumental to jaipongan's success. Jaipongan's eventual popularity is due in no small part to its dissemination in a medium that was new in the 1970s and 80s: cassette recordings. Unlike phonograph technology, which never caught on in Java because of the prohibitive expense of both the equipment to manufacture records as well as the equipment required to play it back, cassette technology provided an economical means both to produce and play back prerecorded music. Furthermore, it came along precisely at a time when the Indonesian middle class, which could afford such simple luxuries, began to grow. Cassette players and prerecorded cassette tapes became cheaply and widely available throughout Java in the 1970s (Manuel and Baier 1986:99). Gugum and his wife, singer Euis Komariah, founded a recording studio, in part to sell jaipongan recordings. They named the studio Jugala (a kirata for **juara gaya dan lagu**, which means "the champion of style and song"), and released a string of jaipongan cassettes in the 1980s.

And not just jaipongan cassettes—in the 1980s, cassettes became the medium for a phenomenal explosion of popular innovations in traditional Sundanese music. Jugala, along with several other companies (notably Hidayat), churned out releases by the dozens, and accomplished musicians found frequent work in recording studios. Some of these musicians now look back fondly on the *zaman kaset* ("era of the cassette") when they were able to pick up significant extra income by playing for recordings. Many of the cassettes produced in the 1980s are still available for purchase in Indonesia, but not very many new cassettes of traditional music are being produced in Bandung, and those that are released appear to be much more conservative in repertory (perhaps aimed at the tourist or export CD market rather than the local market). Jugala, for example, has not produced any new recordings since 1989 (Euis Komariah, pers. comm., 8/5/99); however, their existing catalogue of recordings is widely available, and their studios are in constant demand for other recording projects.

In these early jaipongan hits, the roles of female singer and female dancer were both highlighted, but performed by separate individuals.

Gugum's choreography was rather athletic, and the singing was quite virtuosic; it would be difficult for anybody to perform both simultaneously. The female performer's two roles are decoupled—separated from one another. Some of Gugum's choreographies were designed for groups of female dancers, whom he deployed on the stage with complex blocking and formations; male audience members were free to ogle the performers as well as appreciate their skill and precision. Other choreographies featured a couple—a man and a woman; in this case, male audience members could experience vicariously the thrills of a truly accomplished man's free dancing through the male dancer (often Gugum himself).

Although choreographed jaipongan dances sidestepped many of the moral objections people had to female dancers, some people still found some jaipongan choreography to be objectionable. A controversy erupted in the Bandung newspaper (*Pikiran Rakyat*, "The People's Thoughts") in the early 1980s over the erotic nature of jaipongan dancing. Discussion centered around "the three Gs," namely *gitek*, *goyang*, and *geol* (Sundanese words for various kinds of rear-end movements), and there were calls to ban jaipongan.

Perhaps the controversy was inflamed by some performances by Tati Saleh, a gifted singer and dancer whose distinguished career by 1980 already included appearances abroad (at the 1964 New York World's Fair, among other venues), a number of pop hits, and parts in Indonesian films (including one, *Nji Ronggeng*, in which she played the role of a ronggeng). Because she danced with Gugum for many of the early exhibitions of jaipongan, she became associated with jaipongan as a dancer in the minds of many Sundanese. Because she was an accomplished singer as well, she would at times combine both roles while performing jaipongan, at first with established groups, and then eventually with her own troupe, LS Tati Saleh Group. Although her credentials as a serious artist were never in doubt, her singing and dancing (and especially the combination of the two activities) were nevertheless perhaps a little too close to an "immoral" presentation for comfort (Tati Saleh is the featured singer of Track 10, "Lindeuk Japati," of the CD that accompanies this book).

The controversy calmed after Gugum released a much tamer, softer, and less overtly erotic jaipongan tune entitled "Serat Salira" ("My Letter"), featuring the mesmerizing voice of Idjah Hadidjah from Karawang. By 1980, Idjah had established a reputation as a pasinden

performing with the wayang golek troupe headed by her husband, dalang Tjetjep Supriadi, and had won a prestigious prize for her singing. Gugum placed her under contract with Jugala; over the course of about four years, she recorded approximately forty cassettes of jaipongan and other music. Another of the songs she recorded for Jugala, “Daun Pulus/Keser Bojong” is among the most famous jaipongan songs and choreographies of all (this tune, along with other Idjah Hadidjah songs, was released in the U.S. by Elektra/Nonesuch Records on an album entitled *Tonggeret* [9 79173-2] in 1987, and rereleased in 2003 as *West Java: Sundanese Jaipong and other Popular Music* [Nonesuch Explorer Series 79815]).

Idjah’s voice and skill in singing attracted many male fans, but by performing with her husband she avoided many of the bad associations that accrue to female singers. Furthermore, she never danced at all. In fact, she never even performed jaipongan music for live events—only during recording sessions. She and her husband continue to scrupulously avoid any activities that might suggest Idjah is anything but a superstar singer (Tjetjep Supriadi, pers. comm., 6/23/99). She told me that the jaipongan recordings were her least favorite because the frenetic drumming interfered with her vocals.

Jugala was not the only successful producer of jaipongan hits. Cicih Cangkurileung is another hugely successful recording artist, who by her own reckoning has released over 100 cassettes. Born into a family of musicians and dalang, she sang in public beginning in her childhood. She assumed the stage name Cangkurileung (“bulbul bird”) when she entered a singing contest; at the time, it was common for singers to take bird names (Suganda 1999). Among Cicih Cangkurileung’s hits is the very successful song entitled “Adumanis.” It is worth discussing “Adumanis” in a little bit more detail, not only because it is quite representative of jaipongan songs, but because its words and music express on many levels the aesthetic values of Sundanese performing arts in general.

The Sundanese-language phrase “adu manis” literally means “sweet clash” or “sweet conflict.” As a general principle, Sundanese find great aesthetic value in the close juxtaposition of things that clash. People often wear combinations of designs and patterns that most Americans would regard as simply too busy; Sundanese take great delight in color combinations that would probably strike Americans as garish. The words of the song “Adumanis” extol the aesthetic principle of “adu manis” on several levels.

First, the lyrics describe jaipongan as a combination of several contrasting Sundanese dance forms—ketuk tilu, penca silat, classical dance, as well as “influences from all over.” Then, the words connect jaipongan dance to matters of romance, by suggesting that jaipongan can be a courtship dance involving flirtatious glances. The song proceeds to characterize romantic relationships between men and women as another sort of sweet conflict; the clash experienced by the couple described in the song is especially sweet because their differences have been magnified by a long separation. The song closes by reminding its listeners that the conflict of romance is everybody’s common experience; it may never be resolved, but it is indeed sweet.

Most jaipongan tunes begin with a fast introductory section, and “Adumanis” is no exception; this opening section exhibits the aesthetic principle of sweet conflicts in several ways. First comes an opening a cappella chorus of men intoning the word “adumanis” in vocal harmony. Then the dynamic drumming that characterizes jaipongan heralds a very loud, boisterous gamelan salendro phrase. After a few bars, however, comes a contrasting section; the tempo is still quite fast, but most of the gamelan instruments drop out, leaving only the delicate sound of the gambang and rebab to accompany the whispered words “adumanis.” The various contrasts—among the voices singing in harmony, and between the loud and soft sections—set the stage for a musical exposition on sweet conflicts.

As is typical in jaipongan songs, the fast introductory section draws to a close with a dramatic slowing in tempo; by the time the goong stroke arrives, the gamelan salendro is playing at a relatively soft volume, at a slow, easy tempo. At this point, Cicih Cangkurileung begins to sing; right away, the ear encounters another sweet conflict—the song’s melody is in the surupan pelog degung, which clashes quite noticeably with the gamelan’s salendro tuning.

It is not long before the next clash arrives. This time, it is the first flurry of drumming that creates the conflict, its volume and speed contrasting deliciously with the leisurely pace of the song. As the drumming proceeds with the standard pola ibing described earlier, the contrasts between the flurries of drum activity and the silences that separate them emerge as yet another sweet conflict. Every aspect of the song—the words, the music, and the choreography—illuminate the aesthetic principle of “adu manis.”

Many, but not all jaipongan songs are self-referential in this way—the words describe some aspect of jaipongan in particular (or music

and dance in general). Many other songs address love or romance in some way or another. Some songs tell stories about historical events. For example, Peter Manuel cites a jaipongan song called “Mat Peci” in his section on jaipongan in *Popular Musics of the Non-Western World* (Manuel 1988:213–219); it describes a Sundanese “Robin Hood”-style antihero.

The words to another jaipongan hit, “Lindeuk Japati” (composed by Nano S. and sung by Tati Saleh; see Figure 4.14 and listen to Track 10 of the CD that accompanies this book), however, do not address dance specifically at all. Yet, they may indirectly evoke the image of a ronggeng dancer. Here the words paint a picture of a woman who seems eager to flirt but who flits away at the last minute without making commitments; the image of a “pet dove”—sometimes affectionate but always skittish—provides an apt metaphor.

The choreography of “Lindeuk Japati,” as manifest in the drum patterns, is typical. Like bajidoran, jaipongan choreographies usually alternate between the pola ibing (with variations) and mincid (walking) sections. Jaipongan songs typically have a noticeably slower tempo than bajidoran tunes, however. For the most part, complete goong phrases are devoted to one type of phrase or the other. Choreographed jaipongan songs also include a third type of choreographic material, which can be characterized as “alternating” phrases. These are similar to the *jogedan* phrases of Cirebonese topeng (see Chapter Two) and tari kursus in that they are relatively complex drum patterns that repeat several times; dancers usually repeat the same movements, but alternate the direction they face from right to left and back again for each iteration.

Figure 4.15 is a schematic representation of the “Lindeuk Japati” choreography. The diagram does not provide the details of the fast opening section; its presence is acknowledged simply with a box labelled “intro.” Each segment bounded by a double line represents a goong phrase; each segment may be broken into four equal sub-phrases. In the goong phrases labelled “holding pattern,” the drummer plays a soft drum pattern; it is not meant to be danced to. The jaipongan pola ibing phrase, which takes up an entire goong phrase, is indicated in the figures with the notation POLA. The notation MIN represents mincid. The letter ‘x’ represents transitional phases; the letter ‘c’ represents cadential drum patterns leading (usually) to a goong stroke. There is often a transition leading to an alternating pattern, which typically occupies the rest of a goong phrase, ending with a spe-

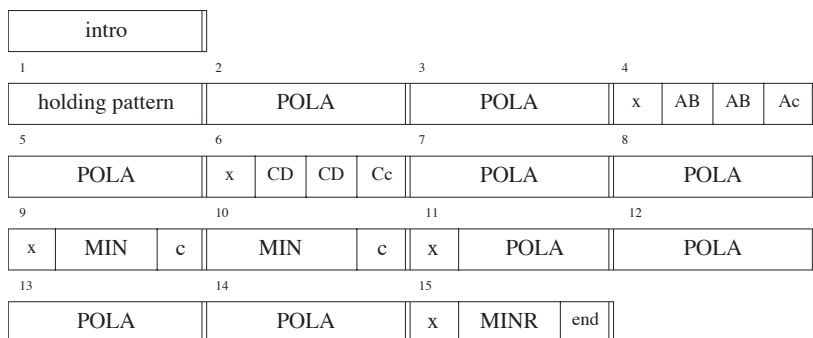
<b>LINDEUK JAPATI</b> Sung by Tati Saleh Composed by Nano S.	<b>PET DOVE</b> Translated by Henry Spiller
Lindeuk japati Bangun lungguh bangun deudeuh Dihaja dihelaran Harepan beunang kacangkring Eh . . . ngejat jauh	Pet dove Looks elegant and full of love If she's approached With the hope of capturing her Eh . . . she moves far away
Lindeuk japati Sorot seukeut umat imut Dicoba dideukeutan Bangun anu ngalayanan Eh . . . ngejat jauh	Pet dove Shining eyes, quick to smile If she's approached In the way she seems to invite Eh . . . she moves far away
Kapanasaran ditantang Ditarekahan sing beunang Si lindeuk sugan kabandang Deukeut deukeut dilomaan Tapi tetep ngajauhan Dikitu dikieu Si lindeuk nampik	Suppressing that embittered feeling Trying to go and meet her The pet, to be attractive Draws close and gets friendly But she always moves away This way or that way The pet always pushes away
Lindeuk japati Horeng teu gampang kataji Lindeukna ukur pamake Lungguh timpuh pulas deudeuh Hatena can puguh daek	Pet dove It's not easy to capture her heart Her appeal is but a ruse Despite an elegant countenance Her heart has yet to be won

Figure 4.14. "Lindeuk Japati" (words and translation)

cial cadential pattern that accentuates the goong stroke. The repeated units of the alternating patterns are represented with capital letters. The special drum pattern that signals the ending of the piece is labelled "end."

When hearing jaipongan drumming for the first time, it might sound impenetrably chaotic and complicated. The schematic diagram in Figure 4.15 gives some insight into how dancers and musicians con-

### Lindeuk Japati / Renggasmara



*Figure 4.15. Schematic outline of “Lindeuk Japati” choreography*

ceive and organize jaipongan choreographies; if they already understand the structure of gamelan music and know the principles of the pola ibing and mincid, there is little left to learn. Except for the alternating patterns (only two gong phrases’ worth in “Lindeuk Japati”), the drum patterns are variations either of the pola ibing or of mincid.

Through cassettes, jaipongan choreographies, as manifest in the drum accompaniments, became widely available in a fixed form. Cassette owners could listen to these tapes over and over again, memorizing the sequence of drum patterns that made up the choreographies, and putting moves together to go with the drum patterns. In this manner, the most popular jaipongan tunes, along with their choreographies, became well-known to many. Proficient dancers often opened dance schools, called *sanggar*, in which they taught all comers their choreographies for the big jaipongan hits; they, too, used the cassette recordings as accompaniment.

Through the medium of cassettes the drum’s role became the leader of dancers; the dancers began to follow the drum accompaniment on the cassettes (Suganda n.d.:9). Cassettes encourage people to dance who might not otherwise be brave enough to get up on stage. They can turn on the tape recorder and find an outlet for their desires, trying out the moves they see other people do, and moving according to the drum patterns in the privacy of their own homes (Somawijaya 1990:59).

And, once they have perfected their routines, they can perform them in public—at hajat celebrations for weddings and circumcisions. Live musicians are strongly preferred over canned music at hajat, so

dancers who hone their routines to the accompaniment of commercial cassettes expect their live accompanists to provide the same (or at least recognizably similar) music and drumming. Jaipongan drummers learn the choreographies from cassettes, too. Some jaipongan drummers develop personal shorthand notation systems that enables them to reproduce a wide selection of jaipongan sequences without having to memorize them all, but many drummers have memorized the most famous jaipongan drum parts.

As was the case with the development of *tari kursus*, the creation of jaipongan involved contextual as well as technical innovations. Gugum's jaipongan dances were meant to be presentational and were performed on stage, for seated audiences, but they nevertheless captured some of the thrills that characterize participational dance. The passive audiences could experience vicariously the excitement of dancing with a *ronggeng*, of dancing like a rogue, and of playing with the double standard of masculinity.

One significant difference between jaipongan and *tari kursus* was that jaipongan dances, unlike *tari kursus* dances, featured female dancers prominently. The concept in both genres was to make the female performer more respectable by separating the two roles of singer and dancer. In *tari kursus*, the female's role as a dancer was eliminated completely, although the *ronggeng* image was still referenced by a *pasinden*'s singing. In jaipongan, there were two prominent female roles, performed by two separate performers. Although female jaipongan movements are usually characterized as provocative, and Sundanese men frequently ogle the female dancers, the female dancers themselves often insist that jaipongan is not sexy at all, and resent any suggestions that it is perceived as such. Female dancers' own image of themselves as artists is at odds with the sexual implications of the *ronggeng* image. They stress that their movements are rooted in Sundanese tradition, which they imagine is too worthy of respect to have such mundane associations. Female dancers who regard themselves as artists find it difficult to accept the idea that they are objectified by their male audiences; their self-deceptive denial of their sex appeal by invoking the lofty authority of tradition disregards the historical realities of Sundanese female performers (see Figure 4.16).

Gugum's jaipongan dances are presentational dances, meant to be watched. As it is performed by amateur dancers at *hajat*, however, jaipongan is often reconstituted as a participational dance form. Indeed, in most social contexts, the boundary between presentational





*Figure 4.16. A group jaipongan dance performed at the Bandung kabupaten; note that the portraits of the president and vice president of Indonesia seem to gaze down on the dancers approvingly (Henry Spiller)*

and participational jaipongan is quite fluid. Featured female dancers often find themselves partnered with guests, and guests often pay the musicians to follow them instead of the formal program (see Figure 4.17). One of jaipongan's advantages is that its conventions allow, even encourage, this ambiguity. Thus, jaipongan, unlike tari kursus, provides a way for fans to remain respectable by most standards without having to give up hearing, seeing, and even interacting with a female singer-dancer. In amateur jaipongan dancing, once again, the persistent pattern of free dancing, facilitated by ronggeng and animating drumming, is reasserted.

### *Jaipongan as "Tradition"*

When I first arrived in Bandung, the capital of West Java, in 1981, the Sundanese residents were not accustomed to seeing American faces, especially on the various forms of public transportation that I used to



*Figure 4.17. A male guest with professional female jaipongan dancers at a wedding (Henry Spiller)*

get around the city. They typically expressed their curiosity by asking me what I was doing there. “I’m here to study traditional music and dance” became my pat answer, and I became accustomed to the inevitable follow-up question: “Have you learned jaipongan yet?”

What’s remarkable about this conversational exchange is that jaipongan, at the time, was *not* considered by most Sundanese to be traditional, but rather to be a new music and dance craze that was sweeping the region and even gaining national popularity. Unlike other popular music fads, which were characterized by the sounds of a global pop idiom (guitars, keyboards, and simple chord progressions), however, jaipongan looked and sounded distinctly Sundanese. It involved gamelan salendro music, featured the singing of a pasinden, and utilized dance movements drawn from penca silat (Sundanese martial arts) and traditional dances. Yet there was clearly something about it that set jaipongan outside of most people’s understanding of what tradition meant. By asking me—an outsider with a stated interest in Sundanese traditional music and dance—about jaipongan, I suspect that the Sundanese strangers I met were trying to clarify in their own minds exactly how to comprehend the paradox presented by this “modern tradition.”

It took fewer than ten years for jaipongan to become transformed from a new innovation into the preeminent form of Sundanese “tradi-

tional” performing arts. In 1980 jaipongan was controversial and there were calls to have it banned; by 1990, jaipongan performances could be seen in hotel lobbies, at cultural shows, and in the recitals sponsored by *sanggar* (private studios) teaching dance. Some people even speak of a “‘Modern Classic’ concert style” of jaipongan (Broughton, Ellingham et al. 1994:429). Since the 1990s, presentational jaipongan has become an important part of the curriculum at the government-sponsored college-level school of the arts (Sekolah Tinggi Seni Indonesia [STSI]) in Bandung. STSI students write theses on the fine details of jaipongan style, choreography, and costuming.

One effect of all of this official acceptance is to choke off the amateur approach to jaipongan. After all, jaipongan is now something one goes to college to study! It is therefore perceived to be too difficult for the average fellow to master. In addition, jaipongan has come to be seen as an important symbol of Sundanese regional identity; it is therefore perceived to be of use only for expressing how Sundanese culture differs from other regional cultures in Indonesia, and of little use to those for whom Sundanese-ness is a given. Sundanese dance, and the uniquely Sundanese-sounding gamelan music that accompanies it, become less relevant to ordinary people the more they perceive them to be not only difficult, but disconnected from their daily lives and concerns.

### **Dangdut as “Traditional” Music**

City dwellers especially have come to feel that Sundanese-sounding music is incapable of accompanying improvised, self-motivated dancing, and that it is good only for displaying a regional identity. During my stay in West Java, I noted that the further one got from the center of cosmopolitan Bandung, the more likely there was to be amateur male dancing to *ketuk tilu* or jaipongan music. Dangdut music, on the other hand, inspired dancing among men whether it was in cities or in rural areas.

*Dangdut* is a popular music phenomenon with a large following throughout Indonesia. Hit songs are recorded by a small number of star performers and promulgated via radio and television. Dangdut music is usually performed using an ensemble based on *orkes melayu* (Malay orchestra) that may feature Western instruments such as guitars and keyboards as well as a transverse flute (*bangsing*).

As has often been pointed out, the only thing distinctly Indonesian about dangdut is its language—but even that is shared to a certain extent with its Malay predecessor, orkes melayu (Malay orchestra). It also incorporates influences from Western popular music and Indian film music, which came to Indonesia via mass media (Lysloff and Wong 1998:104). Dangdut's original popularity in Indonesia is usually attributed to the influential songwriter and performer Rhoma Irama, who consciously set out in the 1970s to create a modern popular music that carried an intelligible message to young people without being too Western in style (Hatch 1985).

Rhoma Irama's songs cover the gamut of topics, from intensely political to shamelessly sentimental. "Qur'an dan Koran," which can be heard on *Music of Indonesia 2: Indonesian Popular Music—Kroncong, Dangdut & Langgam Jawa* (Smithsonian-Folkways, 1991), for example, is pure political commentary—it criticizes modern Indonesians for placing too much stock in Westernization and "progress" while forgetting their religious obligations. The title uses newspapers (*koran*) as a symbol of the West and Islam's holy book (the Qur'an) as a symbol of Islam; the two words' almost homophonic pronunciation makes for a powerful statement. "Begadang," which can be heard on the CD *The Rough Guide to the Music of Indonesia* (World Music Network, 2000), on the other hand, chides people who talk too much without saying anything. Many of Rhoma Irama's songs, however, address the standard topics of popular music—love, romance, and heartbreak.

Dangdut's characteristic dance groove is usually played on a small bongo-like double drum called *tabla* (Hatch 1985:218) or *calti* and consists of two accented drum strokes, the first of which is low-pitched ("dang") and the second of which rises in pitch ("dut"; see Figure 4.18). On *calti*, this rising pitch is effected by striking the drumhead and applying pressure with the heel of the hand to tighten the head and raise the pitch. The drum and technique are derived from North Indian *tabla*. These drum sounds came to Indonesia through the medium of Hindi film music (Lockard 1998:94). Ethnomusicologist Peter Manuel relates the dangdut drum rhythm from a North Indian

	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8
					dang		dut						dang		dut

Figure 4.18. Dangdut groove

rhythm called *kaherva*, which was common in Indian film music (Manuel 1988:211). The emblematic groove can also be played on other drums, including the standard set of Sundanese *gendang*.

Although it is the superstar performers, such as Rhoma Irama, Elvy Sukaesih, and their successors, who make songs popular and set new trends, live performances of dangdut are extremely popular as well; most of these performances feature singers and musicians who have little hope of attaining superstar status (Yampolsky 1994:38). In many circumstances, dangdut music and dancing appear in conjunction with other kinds of music and dance. Most bajidoran groups, for example, supplement their traditional repertoires with dangdut songs (Dahlan 1996:80; Junengsih 1997:vi), when their audiences request them. In and around Bandung, the small-time dangdut singers are known as *artis dangdut* ("dangdut artists"). The moniker *artis*—derived from the English term artist—has a modern connotation, and is mostly used to describe non-gamelan, non-traditional performers.

At Sundanese *hajat*, the entertainment might include an afternoon or evening dangdut performance, with one or several *artis dangdut* singing on stage to the accompaniment of a full-blown *orkes melayu* with *bangsing*, keyboard, bass, dangdut drums, and other instruments. The accompaniment could also be a bit more modest—electronic keyboard and drum machine.

Although dangdut stars are just as often male as female, most of the *artis dangdut* who perform at *hajat* are young women. At the weddings I attended, the *artis dangdut* usually chose a man from the audience to be the central male dancer on stage for each song. She interviewed him, or gave him a *goyang* lesson—*goyang* refers to a sensual rolling hip movement—before beginning to sing and dance. The central male dancer was typically joined by several friends and relatives, who danced with each other while the *artis dangdut* performed. The *artis dangdut* also provided amusing, or at least titillating, patter in between her songs.

In other words, in the context of Sundanese performances, dangdut singers act like *ronggeng*—facilitating men's free dancing. Although their style of dress is modern—typically low-cut dresses or pantsuits made from shiny fabrics in lurid colors, with revealing holes at the midriff and thighs, high platform shoes, thick makeup, and long straight hair—they conform to the *ronggeng* image in that their clothing and demeanor are unusually sexually suggestive. In addition, they



*Figure 4.19. Artis dangdut Mayanti dancing with male guests at a wedding (Henry Spiller)*

sing and dance, and interact with male guests (see Figure 4.19). In the hajjat context, the only significant difference between an artis dangdut and a ronggeng is the sound of the songs (cf. Foley 1989:60–61).

On the surface, dangdut music and dance may seem a significant departure from traditional Sundanese music, in terms of tonal material (dangdut songs are usually modal or diatonic), ensemble (dangdut is not associated with gamelan music), dance groove (the dangdut dance rhythm is continuous, not segmented and varied like the pola ibing), and language (most dangdut songs are in Indonesian rather than Sundanese). However, there is more in common between bajidoran and dangdut dance grooves than might be immediately apparent. Despite differences in their sonic signatures, dangdut and more traditional musical genres occupy the same musical milieu in West Java and mutually influence one another.

The key strokes in the dangdut drum pattern are the two low-pitched beats. A gendang player executes the second of these strokes with his foot on the drumhead; after striking the drum he increases his foot pressure on the head so that the pitch of the sound rises. This creates the eponymous “dang-dut” sounds. Other strokes may be added for variety, but this essential groove is maintained, and the pattern is repeated over and over again, forming a cycle—a continuously repeating rhythm.

The late distinguished Sundanese musician Entis Sutisna believed that the underlying approaches to rhythm that motivate jaipongan/bajidoran and dangdut are indeed quite different. He distinguished between *wanda klasik* (classic style) and *wanda anyar* (new style). The classic style rhythm is characterized by alternating stillness with dynamic drumming and movement, while the new style rhythm is continuous. In his opinion, it is the *dinamika* (dynamics), referring to the sudden contrasts in the classic style, which distinguishes it from the continuous new style (pers. comm., 5/8/99). In everyday language, modern Sundanese typically distinguish between these two styles of dancing with different words: *ibing* and *joged*. *Ibing* usually implies classic style—dancing to Sundanese music with starts and stops—while *joged* suggests new style—dancing to modern, popular music with a continuous groove.

The examples of the jaipongan/bajidoran pola ibing and the dangdut groove support the contention that the two rhythmic approaches are inherently different. But traditional Sundanese dances, such as ketuk tilu, tayub, jaipongan, and bajidoran, include two main sections or grooves; only one of these two grooves is what Entis would call *dinamika*. The other groove, *mincid*, is cyclical and continuous like dangdut. In contrast to Entis's assertion, some people argue that the only difference between jaipongan/bajidoran and dangdut is the accompaniment—dangdut is diatonic and features the “dang-dut” drum rhythm, while jaipongan/bajidoran uses Sundanese scales and drum patterns. As proof, they point out that dancers can and often do use the same dance movements when dancing to dangdut music and jaipongan/bajidoran. In this view, the cyclical, continuous nature of the drumming is not so significant.

Furthermore, there is common musical ground between the pola ibing and the dangdut groove. The rising pitch motive at the end of each of the bukaan and jalak pengkor flurries of activity in the pola ibing (see Figure 4.9 and Figure 4.10), which motivates dancers to strike a pose and wait for the next flurry, is echoed by dangdut's eponymous rising pitch gesture (“dang-dut”). Yet, the dangdut phrase simply continues on with no pause, like *mincid*. In a sense, it is as if the two different grooves that characterize traditional Sundanese dance accompaniment—the pola ibing and *mincid*—have been conflated and condensed into one short, condensed drum pattern.

According to ethnomusicologist Philip Yampolsky, the aim of men when dancing to dangdut “is apparently to be transported to a state where they are unaware of their surroundings, free of self-conscious-



ness and inhibition” (Yampolsky 1994:38)—in other words, precisely the same motivations that *ketuk tilu* and *bajidoran* dancers have. The *dangdut* groove provides the same kind of animation that is implicit in old-fashioned Sundanese drum patterns. Coupled with the charms of a female singer-dancer, it empowers men to dance freely. The persistent idea of men’s free dancing facilitated by *ronggeng* and drumming once again emerges.

The *dangdut* groove is not the only instance of a continuous approach to rhythm replacing more dynamic approaches. The *triping* drum groove in *bajidoran* is another example. In this case, it is the international house music groove that supplied the inspiration. Ironically, a critic for the Indonesian newspaper *Kompas* once argued that *jaipongan* rhythms were fundamentally incompatible with a house music groove (Anon. 1996); he was quickly proven wrong as *triping* became an integral part of *bajidor* music and dance.

Many of the *dangdut* songs that are popular at *hajatan* include significant Sundanese elements. Many songs are from the subgenre *dangdut Indramayuan* from the northern coastal region of Indramayu; Indramayu ensembles typically include *goong*, *kempul*, *kecrek* (a stack of metal plates hit with a mallet), and *gendang*. Songs sometimes feature *jaipongan*-like drum “hooks” and cadential patterns as well, to which dancers always set corresponding dance moves.

*Dangdut* songs become hits via their dissemination through mass media. Like popular music in Europe and America, music videos are an important promotional vehicle for *dangdut* music. Such videos are broadcast on television in West Java on shows devoted to *dangdut*, such as the daily hour-long show “*Sik/Asik*” on SCTV, and the weekly “*Bandung Hits*” on TVRI, and as fillers between other shows.

A number of Sundanese *dangdut* stars have released songs they describe as *dangdut jaipongan* or, sometimes, *pongdut*. These recordings often feature genuine *gendang* players, who perform patterns that split the difference between the *dangdut* groove and *mincid* patterns, interspersed with dramatic *pola ibing*-like patterns. Even if the songs do not include *gendang* in the mix, their videos frequently include a *gendang* player (drums are the only musical instruments shown). The videos often intercut images of female *jaipongan* dancers with scenes of more modern dancing. The videos often include a group of men who actively participate in free dancing. Sometimes the song’s female singer is even depicted as a *ronggeng*.

The images in many of these videos suggest that their creators are



systematically, if not necessarily consciously, bringing to the foreground the similarities between some dangdut music and Sundanese men's dancing. At times, it seems clear the video producers are actively trying to convince the viewers that dangdut music, or at least some of the more Sundanese-influenced dangdut styles, is functionally the same as other men's dance forms; they accomplish this by cutting back and forth between images of traditional dance, such as *ketuk tilu* and *jaipongan* performed by dancers in traditional dance costumes, and more modern hiphop-influenced dangdut dancing done by young men and women dressed in the latest unisex fashions. They literally replace one image with the other in the viewer's field of vision, and thus in their conceptions as well.

A song that artis dangdut frequently perform for dance events in and around Bandung, "Kuda Lumping," suggests other ways in which old meanings of Sundanese music and dance are inscribed onto dangdut. The song's title refers to a rural trance ritual in which men mount straw hobby-horses and dance around to the accompaniment of *angklung* and dog-dog until they enter a trance. While in the trance, they act like horses—eating grass (sometimes eating glass or nails as well) and jumping around. The idea behind the ritual is that spiritual power becomes manifest in a tangible form—a powerful horse entity that takes possession of a human body—and spreads this spiritual power through the community. *Kuda lumping* is similar to *ketuk tilu* and other men's dancing events because it suggests that spiritual power, like masculine energy, is wild and uncontrolled in its natural state, yet is ultimately a good thing. Figure 4.20 shows *kuda lumping* participants, mounted on their hobby horses, going into trance, with several *angklung* players in the foreground.

The lyrics to Rhoma Irama's song "Kuda Lumping" (as sung by dangdut diva Elvy Sukaesih) provide a rather cursory summary of the event. They describe a performance in which someone mounts a fake horse, goes into trance, and does peculiar things such as eat grass and eat glass. The trance state is described with words—"lupa diri" ("forget one's self")—that Indonesians apply to a state of extreme enjoyment as easily as they do to a trance. This state is, in fact, the very state the male dancers seek when they submit to the animating rhythm of drumming and the charm of a *ronggeng*. Thus, the song manages to conflate the ideas of *kuda lumping*'s harnessing of spiritual power, men's dancing, and dangdut all into one neat package.



*Figure 4.20. Kuda lumping dancers in Ujungberung (courtesy Michael Ewing)*

In the chorus, the singer rapidly repeats the words “kuda lumping” several times. The chorus also features a distinctive syncopated drum pattern, with exciting off-beat accents. The repetition of the words suggests the repetitive rhythms that drive kuda lumping dancers into the trance in which they can forget themselves, and invites the dangdut dancers to do the same. The last verse includes a warning not to get too close to the kuda lumping dancers because of the danger of getting caught up in the trance. But, by the time the weak warning of danger comes, it is already too late; the dancers have already taken the opportunity to “forget themselves” by dancing to the strangely compelling chorus.

When I saw male guests dance to “Kuda Lumping,” they always interpreted the syncopated drumming in the chorus to be animating drumming; in other words, they left the usual dangdut movements behind and performed gestures that fit the syncopated patterns. As often as not, these included explicit pelvic thrusts that coincided with the drum accents. It was as if the singer was exhorting them to go into trance with her repeated words, and the drums were empowering them to forget their sense of respectability and perform, in public, mo-

tions that would in most circumstances be considered obscene. The rest of the guests and the artis dangdut encouraged these lapses of propriety with their positive reactions.

The guests who get up to dance freestyle at these modern Sundanese dance events are mostly, but not exclusively, male. Women who get up to dance freestyle act like men in the sense that they interact with the dangdut singer and with each other. Although free dancing is still a mark of masculinity, it is increasingly a form of masculine energy and power in which women, asserting their changing roles in modern Indonesian life, can share.

Fewer and fewer Sundanese (and even fewer urban Sundanese) are interested in learning or doing traditional dances these days, perhaps because these dances no longer have the capacity to articulate energy and power the way dangdut dancing does. Instead, audiences tend to view traditional dances as objects—something to be seen, and even enjoyed, something that presents a favorable image of Sundanese culture to the world, but not something that contributes to their own lives.

Most people do not interpret their disdain for traditional music and dance this way, however. Typical Sundanese people think that ketuk tilu, tari kursus, and even jaipongan is simply “more difficult” to perform than dangdut and joged dancing—even though the bodily movements involved are essentially the same. These old-fashioned dance forms have become assimilated into the foggy category of “tradition.” While most Sundanese endorse their new meanings, through conviction or coercion, it results in the recasting of dance events into presentational, nonparticipational performances, and Sundanese audiences no longer feel empowered or compelled to join in. Artistic productions that maintain the veneer of traditional forms, but change the underlying meaning to express new values, may be thought of as “invented tradition” (Hobsbawm 1983).

Jaipongan occupies an ambiguous place between authentic tradition and invented tradition—a place where dance is still about performing masculinity, even if some of the relationships between free dancing, female singer-dancers, and animating drumming have changed and people’s focus sometimes shifts from participating to watching. Jaipongan belongs to both of these worlds; the ease with which it can slip from one to the other and back again accounts for its phenomenal success as a modern dance genre. In many contexts, jaipongan is synonymous with ketuk tilu; in other contexts, people take great pains to distinguish the two.

Dangdut music resists incorporation into regionalism and nationalism precisely because it has such tenuous regional and national ties. Its origins lie outside Indonesia (in India and Malaysia) and its popularity transcends any single region or ethnic group. The character of dangdut music may, in fact, match the “national character” that Indonesians seek (Frederick 1982:124). Although for many years dangdut was regarded as low-class music for the working poor, in recent years its status has risen considerably; it is now socially acceptable for Indonesians of all economic classes to enjoy dangdut music.

Dangdut’s surface details cannot possibly stand for the contribution of a single ethnic group to the diversity of an Indonesian nation. At the same time, dangdut is susceptible to the overlay of regional flavors and colors, and frequently appears in such guises; in this sense, it cannot stand for the unity of an Indonesian nation, either. Because it fills the cracks between national and regional music, consumers are able to do with it whatever they will.

So, many Sundanese focus on music and dance that is cast in a decidedly non-traditional idiom—dangdut. Dangdut, then, is subversive in that its fans resist the realignment of music and dance into the discourse of national politics. It is conservative, however, in its incorporation of an entrenched Sundanese pattern involving free dancing, female performers, and animating drumming. For Sundanese men, the whole point of the exercise of movement is to dance one’s way into the social matrix, to find a way to physically integrate one’s body into the maze of contradictions that make up masculine identities. In traditional dance events, female singer-dancers are objects of desire that inspire the men to behave like “real” men, and the drumming provides a convenient excuse to explain their free behavior.

This traditional pattern of interaction between performers has characterized many different music and dance genres: ketuk tilu, tayuban, tari kursus, jaipongan, and dangdut. In recent times, however, the sounds of some of these genres have acquired new meanings that replace traditional Sundanese values with more modern ones. The new values gain some legitimacy through their association with old-fashioned music. It is ironic that the most direct vehicle with which to accomplish the very traditional Sundanese dance of masculine posturing currently is dangdut music—arguably among the *least* traditional sounding music in common circulation in West Java. By avoiding—even precluding—the sonic emblems of Sundanese music that have come to represent invented tradition and the values it engenders,

dangdut is able to provide a forum for enacting an unassailably authentic approach to Sundanese dance. Viewed in this way, it is clear that the guitars and synthesizers of dangdut should be considered to be among the traditional sounds of Indonesia.

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## *Chapter 5*

# Music and the Future

The previous chapters have described how a number of persistent, entrenched musical processes are manifest in both the music of the past and the music of the present in Southeast Asia. These processes continue to undergird contemporary musical expressions—even though these modern expressions may sound, on the surface, quite different from older musics. The example of Indonesian music in general, and Sundanese music in particular, illuminates the paradox of musical change: change grows out of continuity, and tradition is as much about the present as it is about the past. As the old saying goes, the more things change, the more they stay the same.

### **Musical Processes and Layers of Influence**

Chapter One related musical processes such as interlocking parts and ostinatos to the geographic and cultural ecology of Southeast Asia. The hot, humid environment of Southeast Asia is favorable for percussion instruments made of bamboo and bronze. Interlocking parts represent an artistic manifestation of the kind of close cooperation that wet-rice cultivation mandates. An aesthetic appreciation of the composite of interlocking musical parts reinforces a cultural appreciation of the fruits of cooperative living. It is little wonder that ostinatos composed of simple interlocking patterns played on percussion instruments acquired rich significance in such an environment.

The subsequent chapters articulated how subtle inflections of these processes could model inflections in the ecological, ideological, and cultural realities of Indonesians. Ostinatos were already attuned to the cycles of seasons that govern agriculture; it was a small adjustment, then, to associate ostinatos with more sophisticated Indic ideas of

cyclic cosmic time. In the courts of Hindu-Javanese god-kings, these cycles grew into enormously complex aural mandalas that made audible these rulers' roles as the interface between the cosmos and the kingdom. The musical processes originally associated with egalitarian cooperation came to support an entirely different social pattern. Just as the new social patterns were laid over older ones, these musical processes produced new kinds of sounds, and acquired new meanings, without completely eradicating their original ones.

Simultaneous variation as a musical process has a similar pedigree. It is easy to imagine the genesis of simultaneous variation arising from the differences in instrumental idioms—playing the “same” tune on musical instruments with different capabilities and idiosyncrasies naturally resulting in melodic variations that highlight the different instruments' idioms. In this guise, simultaneous variation models an egalitarian society in which different voices cannot help but impart their own individual flavor, even when they are expressing the same thing. With only a slight twist, however, simultaneous variation becomes polyphonic stratification, in which each voice has a hierarchical position and a circumscribed role. Some instruments are constrained to play only simple, unvarying parts, while others are empowered to improvise more freely than ever. In this case, the musical texture not only models a stratified, class-conscious society—it helps make the new social order seem linked to the old one.

### *Layers*

As a general rule, what makes music everywhere so powerfully expressive is its capability of sending different—even contradictory—messages at the same time. A simple example: A song about a lost love might combine words that express pleasant memories with a melancholy tune to depict the conflict of happy memories with deep sadness that one might feel in this situation. When we hear such a song, we somehow experience two contradictory feelings—the flush of love and the pain of loss—at the same time. In Southeast Asian musics, rhythmic cycles composed of multiple ostinatos simultaneously express both egalitarian and hierarchical social principles. Polyphonic stratification simultaneously models equal social relations based on reciprocity and social classes based on rigid functional roles. Cloaked in aesthetic

beauty, these contradictions acquire a veneer of naturalness and inevitability.

In Indonesian music, the existence of competing, contradictory meanings in music is particularly clear because of the way the various meanings are layered on top of one another. Just as the layers in a rock formation provide geologists a static picture of the dynamic geological processes that created the formation, the distinctness of the various layers in Indonesian music provide a window into understanding the complex, competing meanings the music expresses.

Most of the Southeast Asian gong-chime music discussed in the previous chapters makes use of a basic four-layered musical texture. The first layer is usually some sort of cyclic ostinato, generally resulting from the playing of interlocking parts. This colotomic foundation provides a foundation for the next two layers, namely main melody and elaboration (simultaneous variation). A fourth layer—drumming—provides a means to control and coordinate the other layers.

A broad outline of Southeast Asian histories is evident in the instrumentation of many ensembles. Bronze instruments, made using technology that is uniquely Southeast Asian, frequently provide the ostinato parts; drums of Indian design represent another layer. Arabic-influenced bowed string instruments and frame drums recall the coming of Islam to the region, while European-derived instruments recall the colonization of the area. These instruments' unique sonic signatures evoke these historical changes; when heard all together, they create an aural representation of the region's many-layered and dynamic history.

### **Musical Change and "Tradition"**

Thus, traditional Southeast Asian music is the outcome of generations of dynamic historical and social changes; each generation of musicians and listeners takes the music traditions of the past, adds its own stamp in the present, and passes it on to the future. Although there is continuity in the musical processes that undergird each generation's music, the actual sounds might change considerably as the years pass. As opposed to a rigid notion of "tradition" (in quotation marks here to suggest this notion's problems) as a static time capsule from the past in the form of institutions and practices which have not changed from generation to generation, genuine traditions (without quotation marks) are (as

Richard Taruskin puts it) “engines of change—perpetual, gradual, regenerative, unstoppable change” (Taruskin 1995:182). Similarly, “authenticity” (again, in quotes) is conceived as a quality that stems from an unwavering dedication to the preservation of rigid traditions. There is a temptation to regard anything that seems modern as non-traditional and inauthentic because it seems self-evident that modern things are at odds with these rigid principles of “tradition” and “authenticity.”

However, the very sounds that seem to represent “tradition,” as we have seen, are themselves the products of generations of change. “Traditional” Cambodian, Thai, and Indonesian gong chime ensembles literally model in sound the rise and fall of kingdoms and the ups and downs of history. It is only from our perspective, far away from these events in both time and space, that they seem static at all. The sounds are not traditional in the sense that they represent something from the past carried unchanged into the present, but rather traditional in the sense that they are the ever-shifting summation of the past reconfigured for the present. As time goes on, each present moment’s reconfiguration is absorbed into the summation as the sounds and processes are reconfigured for the future and a new generation.

Although the particular sounds of any traditional music are at first merely the direct consequence of the particular musical processes that created them, over time the sounds acquire meanings of their own, independent of the processes that created them. For example, the ponderous colotomic formal structures of Central Javanese gamelan music described in Chapter Two were at first sonic expressions of the Javanese king’s position as the interface between the cosmic universe and the tangible world. By representing the cosmic order in sound—specifically by organizing different ostinato cycles so that they coincided in auspicious ways—the king’s music effectively imposed cosmic order onto his own realm to ensure its harmonious existence. The process—layers of ostinatos—that modelled cosmic order produced a particular kind of musical sound. Over time, the sounds themselves came to be associated with royal courts, god-king theater-states, and stratified societies.

In Southeast Asia, in more recent times, these associations between gong-chime music and political authority have become less specific; people connect these sounds not with a particular king or social order, but rather with a more generalized sense of national or ethnic identity. Ironically, sounds that originally modelled a social organization with a god-king at its center can come to represent a modern, democratic na-

tion-state that rejects the very notion of hereditary rule by divine right. In this way, traditional sounds take on new meanings that may contradict the original processes that formed them.

According to Benedict Anderson, modern nation-states are “imagined communities” in which large groups of unrelated strangers collectively imagine some sort of close kinship with one another to forge a unified political entity—a “country” (Anderson 1991). Unlike the historical Southeast Asian mandala states, in which a ruler’s influence spread only as far as his personal connections, modern nation-states rely on a government’s capability to create a sense of unity among a large group of people who can never have personal connections to one another. In the present, the classical music traditions of the kings of mandala states can represent abstractly the past glories and achievements of successful empires with charismatic leaders of legendary proportions. An appreciation of classical music, then, forges an imaginary link between each stranger in the present with that glorious past. This imagined shared heritage strengthens the sense of connection that strangers feel with one another in the present, and reinforces their sense of an imagined community. Often newly-formed Southeast Asian countries place a great emphasis on preserving and democratizing the classical music traditions of the royal courts, with the intention that these traditions will foster a sense of national identity, unity, and pride.

For comparable reasons, the communist Khmer Rouge regime, led by Pol Pot, which controlled Cambodia in the late 1970s, sought to systematically eradicate classical music. They recognized that the musical processes involved in court music were sonic representations of the stratified social order that they presumably sought to eradicate utterly and completely to create a truly communistic social order. For Pol Pot, effecting a complete break with the non-communist past necessitated the elimination of all traces of the musical traditions connected with it, and quite a few court musicians were among the millions of victims of the Khmer Rouge genocide.

### *New Meanings for Old Music*

These recontextualized classical music traditions, however, are not the musical forms of the past; rather, they have changed considerably from their original court forms to fit these new situations. Javanese gamelan provides an example. To most Western ears, the gamelan music prom-

ulgated by the Indonesian government-sponsored music institutions sounds foreign and exotic enough, primarily because of its strange and unfamiliar musical instruments, scales, textures, and timbres. It is tempting to equate this strangeness with antiquity and changelessness—to imagine that gamelan music has survived the centuries unchanged and represents a living fossil from the past. The preceding chapters have described, however, many of the ways in which gamelan music has indeed changed over time. Truly ancient forms of gamelan, such as the austere *sekaten* ensembles described in Chapter Two, are quite different in sound and concept from the nineteenth- and twentieth-century court music of Central Java (discussed in the same chapter); the musical processes of these two ensembles express the very different social meanings that they embody.

Furthermore, it is possible for the values that underlie musical processes to change without drastically affecting the musical surface. In the case of gamelan music, Westerners and Javanese alike often marvel at the apparent resilience of gamelan music in the face of relentless Western influence. They are amazed that despite the propensity of Central Javanese sultans and princes to adopt the trappings of their Dutch overlords—including crystal chandeliers, card games, and even ballroom orchestras and dances—their gamelan music did not come to sound like Western music. Of course, such individuals are falling into the trap of using surface details—musical instruments and tuning systems—as the measure of resilience and continuity with the past. While ethnomusicologist Sumarsam agrees that “there was no significant musical syncretism between gamelan and European music” (Sumarsam 1995:241), he also points out these surface details are not as significant as the underlying concepts that support them. Sumarsam documents significant changes in the processes and values that govern gamelan music, and charts how Western ideas such as music notation and fixed compositions, as well as a notion of high and classical arts, had profound effects on Javanese gamelan music in the Javanese courts during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; these effects are even more pronounced in the gamelan music taught and performed at the Indonesian government-sponsored music institutes. Although it is not necessarily immediately apparent to casual Western listeners, modern Javanese gamelan music places much more emphasis on a fixed melody (the *balungan* described in Chapter Two) and less emphasis on simultaneous variation.

Sundanese *degung* (see Chapter Three) provides another example.

In this case, the aristocratic sound of the small degung ensemble came to stand for a Sundanese regional and ethnic identity within a larger Indonesian national framework. The instrumentation and tuning system of the ensemble became the hallmarks of a uniquely Sundanese sound, facilitating all sorts of experiments in musical form, style, and repertory. Although the overall sound of degung retains an air of Sundanese-ness, a wide array of new musical processes, borrowed from other Sundanese and Indonesian genres as well as from imported musical forms, have found their way into the degung tradition. In contemporary West Java, degung music has the means to provide a tangible expression of each Sundanese person's multiple identities as individuals of Sundanese descent, residents of West Java, citizens of Indonesia, and global consumers.

### *Old Meanings for New Music*

Dangdut music and dance also provide means to explore multiple identities, but coming from a much different angle. In this case it is not the sounds that are linked to the past, but rather the underlying musical processes. As discussed in Chapter Four, the musical sounds of dangdut themselves are global in nature, combining features of global pop, Indian film music, and Malay elements. Although dangdut's sonic signature is inherently international, it also lends itself quite easily to localizations; by incorporating local instruments into the mix, or tweaking the melodies, harmonies, and vocal styles, dangdut can take on distinctly regional characters.

Perhaps more significant, however, is the manner in which Indonesian dangdut fans have taken the modern sounds of dangdut and layered them over old-fashioned musical processes. The driving "dangdut" drum pattern that gives the genre its name is, of course, a simple ostinato that hearkens back to the earliest kinds of Southeast Asian music-making—despite this particular ostinato's distinctly Indian roots. The close connection between the dangdut rhythm and dance movements in the minds and bodies of dangdut fans is a manifestation of yet another long-standing Indonesian musical process—a connection between drumming and dance, and the ability of drum sounds to animate human bodies.

The response of Balinese musicians and artists to tourism provides still another variation on the theme of recontextualization. Chapter

One outlined anthropologist Clifford Geertz's explanation of pre-twentieth-century Balinese kingdoms as "theater-states," in which rulers sponsored elaborate rituals not only to demonstrate, but to legitimate as well, their divine rights and authority—to the point where the rituals themselves became the source of power (Geertz 1973:335).

The Balinese kings are long gone, but the elaborate rituals and performances retain a prominent place in Balinese life. Although they remain meaningful to Balinese people as religious, spiritual, and pragmatic practices, they also have acquired a new function: as tourist attractions. Since the early part of the twentieth century, when the island acquired a reputation for artistic spectacle, Bali has been a popular destination for cultural tourists—foreigners looking to sample the novelty of unfamiliar, but attractive and compelling, cultural practices. A variety of new performances aimed at the tourist market have become staples of Balinese arts—the core of this new tradition. In this sense, tourism is the new god-king of the Balinese theater-state because it becomes both the cause and the effect of continued artistic activities.

If nations are imagined communities, then conceiving the much larger global village requires even more dramatic leaps of imagination. A number of global music genres have proliferated throughout the world via mass media. In the twenty-first century, three-minute pop songs, with standard verse-chorus-verse format, along with MTV-style videos replete with beautiful people, colorful costumes, elaborate dance routines, and lightning-fast image cuts, are universally-recognized artistic forms. Pop songs and videos provide a convenient unit of global musical exchange—instantly understood by millions of people in hundreds of countries all over the planet.

A global pop song fits well into the workings of global capitalism because it can be conceived and traded as a commodity, especially when fixed into a tangible object in the form of sheet music or a recording. At the same time, however, a song's significance remains latent until it is performed—spun out in real time, with real people watching and/or performing. And each time it is played or performed, a song can acquire new meaning and new value. In this way, a global pop song confounds global capitalism, because it is the performance in real time, rather than the object itself, that has real value. The first years of the twenty-first century have been marked by bitter arguments over copyright laws—what it means to own a song, how the owners of songs should be compensated for their use, and who has the right to control distribution of recordings.



### Global and Local Meanings

It is perhaps for this reason that the global musical economy has yet to completely wipe out local musical styles. Perhaps because the leap of imagination required to truly conceive a global community is simply too great, people tend to group themselves into much smaller, localized communities within the global context; without some attention to local interests, people tend to feel out of place, disenfranchised, and disconnected. Musical expressions provide one means for such groups to construct viable identities within local, national, and global contexts. Vital musics play with the local, the national, and the global to negotiate stances that combine local, national, and global identities together into a workable balance.

As long as Southeast Asian communities are based on mutual cooperation and emphasize local control with a loose, almost spiritual guidance from above, Southeast Asian musical processes (which derive from ecological and cultural histories), including ostinato, interlocking parts, and layering, will continue to be relevant, regardless of the surface sounds they produce. And, as long as those processes guide and undergird musical activities, musicians and listeners alike will come to cherish as beautiful the underlying values manifest in the processes.

The traditional sounds of Southeast Asian gong-chime ensembles, such as Sundanese, Javanese, and Balinese gamelan music, on the other hand, have acquired meanings of their own which can play an important part in the construction of local, regional, ethnic, and national, and even inter- and transnational identities. The project of modern nation-states is to foster a sense of community among large groups of people who have no real interpersonal connections to one another in order to solidify and strengthen a strong central governmental authority. The unique surface sounds of the music of various Southeast Asian mandala governments—which ironically developed to make manifest in sound a central loose authority over intense local cooperation—can be and have been redeployed by modern nation-state governments to provide a sense of shared history and destiny among otherwise unconnected groups of people.

The coexistence of these two contradictory, yet strangely complementary, approaches to musical sounds—one in which traditional musical processes result in a variety of new musical surfaces, and the other

in which existing traditional musical surfaces are separated from the processes that created them and endowed them with new-fangled meanings—creates a rich, many-layered, ever-changing musical soundscape in Southeast Asia. In Indonesia, a consideration of these two approaches helps to make sense of a culture in which ancient, ceremonial gamelan music, modern pop songs with gamelan accompaniment, and dangdut songs with guitar and synthesizer accompaniment can exist side-by-side. Because they have roots in the past, meaning in the present, and possibilities for the future, all of these varied musical expressions are indeed the traditional sounds of Indonesia.

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# Glossary

- adat** Indonesian traditional system of social, legal, and religious principles; traditional laws and customs
- adeg-adeg** basic Sundanese men's dance position
- agung** in Maguindanao *kulintang* ensembles, a pair of hanging gongs with deep flanges
- ala genah** final drum pattern in *bajidoran* drumming's standard pattern; also called *ngala genah*
- alihan** transitional movements in Cirebonese *topeng* dance
- angklung** Sundanese bamboo rattle; also a kind of four-pitch Balinese *gamelan*
- angsel** special kind of drum pattern and dance movement in Balinese *gong kebyar*
- arakk** Cambodian shamanic healing ceremony
- arkuh lagu** pitch framework for a Sundanese piece or song (also called *pola lagu* or *tugu lagu*)
- artis** Indonesian term denoting a performing artist
- artis dangdut** *dangdut* singer
- ayak-ayakan** a type of Central Javanese piece
- babandil** in Maguindanao *kulintang* ensembles, a single hanging gong
- bahasa Indonesia** the national language of Indonesia; "Indonesian"
- bajidor** Sundanese male dance fanatics
- bajidoran** Sundanese dance events catering to *bajidor*
- bakat** Indonesian (and Sundanese) term meaning tendency or aptitude
- balitaw** Visayan island dialogue songs from the Philippines
- balungan** skeleton or framework of a Central Javanese *gamelan* piece; also called *balunganing gendhing*
- balunganing gendhing** see *balungan*
- ban** Indonesian word for band; western-style combo with keyboards, guitars, and drums
- bangbrang** largest *dog-dog* in a *reog* ensemble
- bangsing** transverse flute associated with *orkes melayu* and *dangdut* ensembles
- banjar** Balinese village organizations of people working together to achieve common goals
- banjet** north-coast Javanese dance/theater form
- barang** a Sundanese pitch name (equivalent to *tugu*)

- batangan** in Central Javanese *gamelan*, a medium-sized *kendhang*-style drum; also called *ciblon*
- batik** wax-resist technique for dying cloth
- bawa** unaccompanied vocal introduction to a Central Javanese *gendhing*
- bedug** in Central Javanese *gamelan* or in *gamelan sekaten*, a large barrel-shaped drum with skin heads attached at each end with large wooden pegs
- beleganjur** Balinese ceremonial marching ensemble with gongs, drums, and cymbals
- bem** a Sundanese pitch name (equivalent to *galimer* or *gulu*)
- beri** in Sundanese *goong renteng* or in *gamelan sekaten*, a flat, unbossed gong (in *gamelan sekaten*, also called *cret* or *kecrek*)
- besi** Indonesian word for “iron”
- Bhinneka Tunggal Ika** Indonesia’s national motto (Old Javanese for “unity in diversity”)
- biola** Malay term for Western violin or similar instruments; also called *biyula*
- biyula** See *biola*
- bobodoran** Sundanese word for clowning around
- bodoran** Cirebonese term for clowning
- bonang** in Central Javanese *gamelan*, a generic term for a family of horizontal gong chimes with ten to fourteen pots arranged in two rows; in Sundanese *degung*, fourteen-pot horizontal gong chime arranged in one row on a V- or U-shaped frame; in Sundanese *gamelan salendro*, horizontal gong chime with ten to fourteen small knobbed gongs arranged in two rows; in *gamelan sekaten*, large one-row gong chime
- bonang barung** in Central Javanese *gamelan*, the lower-range *bonang*
- bonang panerus** in Central Javanese *gamelan*, the higher-range *bonang*
- bonang renteng** large, one-row gong chime in Sundanese *goong renteng*; also called *koromong* or *kokuang*
- bonggar-bonggar** balcony of a Toba Batak house
- buah** literally “fruit”; the practical, self-defense aspect of *penca silat* (as opposed to *kembang*, “flower,” the performing aspect).
- buhun** Sundanese word meaning “ancient”
- bukaan** opening drum pattern in *bajidoran* drumming’s standard pattern
- bungur** a Sundanese pitch name in *pelog* (equivalent to *liwung*)
- bupati** administrative official in charge of a *kabupaten* (administrative unit equivalent to a county)
- calti** small, bongo-like double drum used for *dangdut*; also called *tabla*
- calung** second-lowest-pitched *gender*-family instrument in a Balinese *gong kebyar* ensemble; also a Sundanese bamboo musical instrument
- campala** a wooden hammer used by a Sundanese *dalang* to give signals to the *gamelan*; he holds the *campala* in his right hand and gives signals by knocking it against the wooden chest in which he keeps his puppets

- campur sari** Javanese and Sundanese musical styles involving a combination of Javanese and Western instruments
- capang** third drum pattern in *bajidoran* drumming's standard pattern
- caruk** Sundanese interlocking technique
- cecempres** *saron*-like instrument in Sundanese *goong renteng*
- celempung** in Central Javanese *gamelan*, a zither with metal strings; also called *siter*
- cempres** in Sundanese *degung*, fourteen-key metallophone (also called *titil* or *demung*)
- cengceng** in Balinese *beleganjur*, pair of cymbals; in Balinese *gong kebyar*, a set of six or more cymbals played by a single player
- cengkok** Central Javanese term for melodic pattern, melody, melodic style, or process of melodic movement
- chhepp** damped, choked sound produced on Cambodian *chhing*
- chhing** pair of small cymbals in Cambodian *pinn peat* ensemble; also the open, undamped sound produced on the instrument
- Cianjuran** Sundanese sung poetry (also called *tembang Sunda*)
- ciblon** in Central Javanese *gamelan*, a medium-sized *kendhang*-style drum; also called *batangan*
- cindek** Sundanese dance gesture; also called *koma*
- colotomic form** a musical foundation or timeline in which regular time periods are delineated by punctuating sounds; also called *colotomy*
- colotomy** see *colotomic form*
- cret** in *gamelan sekaten*, a flat, unbossed gong (also called *beri* or *kecrek*)
- dabakan** goblet-shaped drum in Maguindanao *kulintang* ensemble
- dalang** Cirebonese, Balinese, or Sundanese puppet master (see also *dhalang*)
- dalang topeng** Cirebonese *topeng* (masked) dancer
- dalapan wilet** eight *wilet* (see *wilet*)
- damina** Sundanese system of assigning syllable names to the pitches in various *surupan* and tuning systems, similar to Western solfège (do-re-mi); the five syllables (from high to low) are da-mi-na-ti-la
- dangdut** popular Indonesian music and dance style with a characteristic drum groove that makes the sounds “dang-dut”
- deder** fast-tempo section of a Cirebonese *topeng* dance
- degung** a uniquely Sundanese *gamelan* ensemble in the *pelog degung* tuning system
- demung** in *gamelan sekaten*, the larger, lower-pitched keyed metallophones; see also *panerus*
- denggung** type of heirloom *gamelan* in Cirebonese palaces
- dhalang** Javanese puppet master (see also *dalang*)
- diatonic scale** a seven-pitch non-equidistant scale in which there are two small intervals and five large intervals; associated with Western-style music

- disilibkeun** Sundanese for indirectly spoken
- dodoan** slow-tempo section of a Cirebonese *topeng* dance
- dog-dog** Sundanese single-head conical drum
- dog-dog lojor** a Sundanese ceremony following the harvesting of rice
- dua wilet** two *wilet* (see *wilet*)
- egot** kind of interaction between a male fan and a female singer-dancer in Sundanese *bajidoran*
- empat wilet** four *wilet* (see *wilet*)
- enak** Indonesian word meaning delicious, enjoyable
- frame drum** wooden frames with skins stretched across one side
- galimer** a Sundanese pitch name (equivalent to *bem* or *gulu*)
- gambang** Javanese, Cirebonese, or Sundanese xylophone, usually with about 18–21 wooden keys laid over a trough resonator
- gamelan** Indonesian ensembles consisting primarily of bronze percussion instruments
- gamelan angklung** type of Balinese *gamelan* ensemble with a 4-pitch *slendro*-like tuning system
- gamelan gambuh** type of middle-period Balinese *gamelan* ensemble
- gamelan gong gede** large middle-period Balinese *gamelan* ensemble
- gamelan ibu-ibu** all-female *gamelan* groups
- gamelan pelegongan** type of middle-period Balinese *gamelan* ensemble associated with *legong* dance
- gamelan sekaten** in Central Java and Cirebon, type of ceremonial *gamelan* ensemble; also called *gamelan sekati*
- gamelan sekati** see *gamelan sekaten*
- gamelan selap** special Sundanese *gamelan* with extra keys and gongs that enable the instruments to be played in *salendro*, *pelog*, *degung*, and other tuning systems
- gamelan Semar pegulingan** type of middle-period Balinese *gamelan* ensemble which included metallophones and gong-chimes and played repertory derived from *gamelan gambuh*
- gandingan** in Maguindanao *kulintang* ensemble, set of four hanging gongs
- gandrung** eastern Javanese (Osing) dance genre featuring a young, unmarried female singer-dancer (who also is called a *gandrung*)
- gangsà** family of *gender*-family instruments with multiple octaves of keys in Balinese *gong kebyar* ensemble; *saron*-like instrument with many keys in Sundanese *goong renteng* (also called *selukat*)
- gatra** four-note groupings in Central Javanese *balungan* melodies
- gegaboran** Balinese colotomic form for accompanying *gabor* dance
- gendang** in Sundanese ensembles, set of two-headed barrel-shaped drums (see also *kendang*, *kendhang*)
- gendang indung** “mother drum”; large Sundanese two-headed barrel-shaped drum

- gendang leutik** small Sundanese double-head barrel-shaped drum; also called *kulanter* and *ketipung*
- gender** in Cirebonese, Javanese, and Balinese ensembles, a generic term for a family of keyed instruments with thin keys suspended over resonating tubes
- gender barung** in Central Javanese *gamelan*, the medium-pitched member of the *gender* family, with fourteen keys
- gender panerus** in Central Javanese *gamelan*, the highest-pitched member of the *gender* family, with fourteen keys
- gendhing** term for several Central Javanese colotomic forms
- gending karesmen** multimedia Sundanese theatrical productions; sometimes characterized as Sundanese opera
- geol** one of the “three Gs” (with *gitek* and *goyang*) that describe various Sundanese dance movements emphasizing a female dancer’s rear end
- gerong** in Central Javanese *gamelan*, a male chorus
- gilak** a basic colotomic form for Balinese *beleganjur* music
- gitek** one of the “three Gs” (with *goyang* and *geol*) that describe various Sundanese dance movements emphasizing a female dancer’s rear end
- gondang hasapi** Toba Batak string ensemble that imitates musical structure of *gondang sabangunan* using stringed instruments called *hasapi*
- gondang sabangunan** Toba Batak drum and gong ensemble
- gong** round percussion instrument, usually with a broad surface that vibrates and a narrow flange or lip
- gong ageng** in Central Javanese *gamelan* or Balinese *gong kebyar* ensemble, an extremely large hanging gong
- gong chime** a series of gongs with different pitches, usually arranged on a frame
- gong kebyar** type of Balinese *gamelan* ensemble with a 5-pitch *pelog*-like tuning system
- gong siyem** in Central Javanese *gamelan*, a hanging gong (smaller than *gong ageng*); also called *gong suwukan* or *siyem*
- gong suwukan** in Central Javanese *gamelan*, a hanging gong (smaller than *gong ageng*); also called *gong siyem* or *siyem*
- goong** in Sundanese *gamelan salendro*, *degung*, and *goong renteng*, a large hanging gong (in *goong renteng*, there are typically two *goong*)
- goong renteng** Sundanese ceremonial heirloom village *gamelan*
- gordang** in Toba Batak *gondang sabangunan*, large drum
- goyang** one of the “three Gs” (with *gitek* and *geol*) that describe various Sundanese dance movements emphasizing a female dancer’s rear end
- grimingan** *pathet*-specific phrases improvised by a *gender* player as a background for a Central Javanese *dalang*’s narration and dialogue during a *wayang kulit* performance
- gulu** a Sundanese pitch name (equivalent to *bem* or *galimer*)



- hajat** Sundanese ceremonial event to mark life cycle milestones such as weddings and circumcisions
- hasapi** Toba Batak instrument with two plucked strings
- hesek** rattle in a Toba Batak *gondang sabangunan* ensemble
- heterophony** the musical texture that results from simultaneous variations
- horja** Toba Batak ceremonial feast
- ibing** Sundanese dancing to traditional music with rhythmic starts and stops
- ibing keurseus** Sundanese solo male dance based on *tayub* dancing; also called *tari kursus*
- ibing tayub** Sundanese aristocratic men's dance (see *tayuban*)
- idiochord tube zither** string instrument, often made from bamboo, in which the strings are cut from the bark of its wooden resonator
- ingguh** the second of the two sections of a Central Javanese *gendhing*
- interval** the musical distance between two pitches
- intonation** standards for varying and adjusting pitches
- jaipongan** modern Sundanese music and dance genre with *gamelan salendro* accompaniment
- jajangkungan** *ketuk tilu* dance in which *ronggeng* rise up on their toes
- jalak pengkor** second drum pattern in Sundanese *bajidoran* drumming's standard pattern
- jaw harp** mouth-resonated musical instrument whose sound is produced by plucking a semi-rigid tongue of bamboo, wood, or metal
- jegogan** lowest-pitched *gender*-family instrument in Balinese *gong kebyar* ensemble
- jengglong** in Sundanese *degung*, gong chime with six low-pitched gongs, suspended vertically or arranged horizontally; in Sundanese *gamelan salendro*, horizontal gong chime with three to six gongs, flatter and tuned an octave lower than *kenong*
- joged** Sundanese dancing to modern-style popular music with a continuous groove
- jogedan** dance movement units in Cirebonese *topeng* dance
- jongjrong** second-largest *dog-dog* in a Sundanese *reog* ensemble
- juru alok** male vocalist in a Sundanese *gamelan*; also called *wiraswara*
- kabupaten** Indonesian administrative unit approximately equivalent to a county
- kacapi** Sundanese zither
- kacapi-suling** Sundanese instrumental genre utilizing the accompanying ensemble for *tembang Sunda*, that is, two *kacapi* and a *suling*
- kain batik** a length of *batik* cloth
- kakawen** mood song, sung by the *dalang* to set a scene, in Sundanese *wayang golek*
- kantilan** *gangs*a one octave higher than a *pemade* in Balinese *gong kebyar* ensemble

- kasinoman** Cirebonese ritual for young people
- kaum menak** Sundanese aristocratic class
- kawih** in Sundanese usage, an earthy and freely ornamented style of singing
- kecrek** in Sundanese *gamelan*, stack of iron plates hit with a wooden hammer; in *gamelan sekaten*, a flat, unbossed gong (also called *cret* or *beri*)
- kemauan** Indonesian term for desire
- kembang** in Indonesian and Sundanese, literally, “flower”; the aesthetic, dance aspect of Sundanese *penca silat*
- kemong** tiny hanging gong in Balinese *gong kebyar* ensemble
- kempli** small gong laid horizontally on a frame in Balinese *gong kebyar* ensemble
- kempul** in Central Javanese *gamelan*, a gong chime consisting of several small hanging gongs; in Sundanese *gamelan salendro*, a small gong suspended from the same frame as the *goong*
- kempur** smaller hanging gong in Balinese *gong kebyar* ensemble
- kempyang** in Central Javanese *gamelan*, a small, high-pitched *ketuk*-like gong, or a pair of such little gongs
- kendang** Javanese, Balinese, Cirebonese, and Sundanese two-headed barrel-shaped drums (in Sundanese, more typically spelled *gendang*; in Javanese, spelled *kendhang*)
- kendang penca** ensemble that accompanies Sundanese *penca silat* (martial arts), consisting of two sets of *gendang*, a small hanging gong, and a double-reed wind instrument called *tarompet*
- kendhang** in Central Javanese *gamelan*, a two-headed barrel-shaped drums with heads secured with rawhide laces
- kendhang gendhing** in Central Javanese *gamelan*, a large *kendhang*
- kendhang kalih** in Central Javanese *gamelan*, “two drums”—combination of *kendhang gending* and *ketipung*
- kenong** in Central Javanese *gamelan* and Sundanese *gamelan salendro*, a horizontal gong chime with one to six large, high-pitched gongs; a Sundanese pitch name (equivalent to *lorloran* or *loloran*); a main “pillar” pitch in a Sundanese *pola lagu* (also called *pokok* or *posisi kenong*)
- kering** in Sundanese *gamelan*, literally, “dry”; also called *satengah wilet*; medium-fast tempo section of a Cirebonese *topeng* dance
- ketawang** Central Javanese colotomic form
- ketipung** in Central Javanese *gamelan*, a small *kendhang*; small Sundanese double-head barrel-shaped drum (also called *gendang leutik* and *kulanter*)
- ketuk** a small knobbed gong; in Central Javanese *gamelan*, a small horizontal gong hit with a padded stick; in *gamelan sekaten*, a small, horizontal gong
- ketuk tilu** literally, three *ketuks*; a generic term for Sundanese participatory dance traditions, often accompanied by an ensemble featuring a three-*ketuk* gong chime
- keturunan** Indonesian term meaning family lineage or ancestry

- keupat** Sundanese walking dance movement
- khaen** Lao mouth organ
- khawng** Cambodian gong chimes
- kinanthi** a poetic form associated with Central Javanese poetry
- kirata** folk etymology in which each syllable of a target word is said to derive from a different source word; when arranged in order, the source words provide some philosophical insight into the target word's meaning and significance
- klasik** classical
- kliningan** Sundanese performances featuring *gamelan salendro* and singing
- kluncing** metal triangle in the eastern Javanese (Osing) *gandrung* ensemble
- kobongan** a Sundanese mode or *surupan* (also called *pelog degung* or *mataraman*)
- kocak** Sundanese adjective meaning “amusing”
- kokuang** large, one-row gong chime in Sundanese *goong renteng*; also called *bonang renteng* or *koromong*
- kolibit** idiochord tube zither from the Philippines
- kolintang** see *kulintang*
- koma** Sundanese dance gesture; also called *cindek*
- konkurs** Sundanese term (derived from Dutch) for competition
- korng tauch** circular gong chime in Cambodian *pinn peat* ensemble
- korng thomm** circular gong chime in Cambodian *pinn peat* ensemble
- koromong** large, one-row gong chime in Sundanese *goong renteng*; also called *bonang renteng* or *kokuang*
- kostim** a Sundanese aristocrat's personal dance character and song
- kotekan** Balinese interlocking parts
- kotekan empat** type of Balinese interlocking part in which four distinct pitches emerge in the combination of the two parts
- kraton** Javanese or Cirebonese royal palace
- kroncong** hybrid Indonesian musical genre characterized by *gamelan*-like textures played on Western-derived string instruments such as guitar, mandolins, and cellos in conventional Western diatonic tunings
- kubing** jaw harp from Philippines
- kulanter** small Sundanese two-head barrel-shaped drum; also called *gendang leutik* and *ketipung*
- kulintang** southern Philippine gong chime, as well as ensembles involving a *kulintang* gong chime
- ladrang** Central Javanese colotomic form
- lagu** in Indonesian, Sundanese, and Javanese, a word that means “tune” or “song”; in Sundanese *ketuk tilu*, the main part of a dance piece
- lagu alit** “small pieces” in the Sundanese *gamelan* repertoire; also called *lagu leutik*, *sekar alit*, *rancagan*, or *rerenggongan*

- lagu ekstra** metrical song at the end of a series of Sundanese *tembang* songs; also called *panambih*
- lagu gede** “great pieces” in the Sundanese *gamelan* repertory; also called *sekar ageung*
- lagu klasik** core, classical pieces in the Sundanese *degung* repertory
- lagu leutik** “small pieces” in the Sundanese *gamelan* repertory; also called *lagu alit*, *sekar alit*, *rancagan*, or *rerenggongan*
- lagu tengahan** “middle pieces” in the Sundanese *gamelan* repertory
- lam** generic Lao term for vocal music with flexible melodies
- lam klawn** Lao dialogue songs with *khaen* accompaniment
- lam nithan** Lao epic storytelling tradition based on stories about the Buddha
- lancaran** Central Javanese colotomic form
- latihan** Indonesian word for practice or rehearsal session
- lingkung seni** (LS) arts circle; Sundanese performing arts troupe, typically run by a charismatic and business-savvy artist
- liwung** a Sundanese pitch name in *pelog* (equivalent to *bungur*)
- loloran** a Sundanese pitch name (equivalent to *kenong* or *lorloran*)
- lorloran** see *loloran*
- ludruk** eastern Javanese theatrical form
- macapat** Javanese term for a set of poetic forms (equivalent to Sundanese *pupuh* meters)
- madenda** a Sundanese mode or *surupan* (also called *sorog*)
- mak yong** Melayu theater form from eastern Sumatra, the Malaysian peninsula, and the Riau islands
- mandala** sacred representation of the universe, often in the form of a diagram consisting of concentric circles
- mapag Sri** Cirebonese agricultural ceremony to welcome the rice goddess as the crop matures
- mapag tambra** Cirebonese agricultural ceremony held after planting and weeding
- mataraman** a Sundanese mode or *surupan* (also called *pelog degung* or *kobongan*)
- mega mendung** a Cirebonese *batik* motif with stylized rain clouds
- meko** gong ensemble from eastern Indonesian island of Roti
- menak** Sundanese aristocratic class
- merong** the first of the two sections of a Central Javanese *gendhing*
- metallophone** generic term for a percussion instrument with tuned metal keys arranged in a row; can also refer to any metal percussion instrument
- mincid** Sundanese walking dance movement
- mincid rangkep** doubletime *mincid* in Sundanese *jaipongan*
- ngala genah** final drum pattern in *bajidoran* drumming’s standard pattern; also called *ala genah*

- ngampil** in Sundanese, to carry a symbolic object solemnly
- ngremo** opening dance for a eastern Javanese *ludruk* performance
- ngunjung** Cirebonese ceremony giving thanks to Allah and to ancestral spirits
- nyered** special Sundanese *ketuk tilu* drum pattern that begins and ends pieces; also called *nyorong*
- nyorong** see *nyered*
- octave** the musical distance between two pitches when one pitch vibrates exactly twice as fast as the other
- odap** in Toba Batak *gondang sabangunan*, a large drum
- ogel** Sundanese comic entertainment form in which four performers provide their own accompaniment on *dog-dog*; also called *reog*
- ogung** in Toba Batak *gondang sabangunan*, gong chime with four suspended gongs
- ombak** Javanese, Sundanese, and Indonesian word meaning “waves”; undulating quality of sound, often applied to large knobbed gongs
- oncor** three-wick standing oil lamp that illuminates a nighttime Sundanese *ketuk tilu* performance
- oray-orayan** men-only dance in Sundanese *ketuk tilu* events
- orkes melayu** Malay orchestra featuring Western instruments such as guitars, keyboards, and a transverse flute called *bangsing*
- ostinato** short rhythmic and/or melodic pattern or phrase that is repeated over and over
- pakaian adat** Indonesian word for traditional clothing
- panambih** metrical song at the end of a series of Sundanese *tembang* songs; also called *lagu ekstra*
- pancer** Javanese and Sundanese musical process in which a note is inserted between each of the melody’s existing notes
- panelu** a Sundanese pitch name
- panempag** second-smallest *dog-dog* in a Sundanese *reog* ensemble
- panerus** in Sundanese *degung*, fourteen-key metallophone (also called *demung*); in Sundanese *gamelan salendro*, six- or seven-keyed metallophone, one octave lower than *saron*
- pangkat** introductory phrase in a Sundanese *gamelan* piece
- pangkur** a *macapat* poetic meter associated with Central Javanese poetry
- panglima** large gong chime in Sundanese *goong renteng*
- panjang jimat** a Cirebonese ceremony for *sekaten* in which palace heirlooms are washed
- pantun Sunda** Sundanese epic storytelling tradition from West Java, Indonesia
- paparikan** light Sundanese poetic form
- pasinden** Sundanese female singer
- pasyon** lowland Philippine epic storytelling tradition based on Christian stories

- pathet** Central Javanese musical system in which different configurations of pitches are associated with different moods, feelings, or sections of *wayang* performances
- pathet barang** one of three Central Javanese *pelog pathet*
- pathet lima** one of three Central Javanese *pelog pathet*
- pathet manyura** one of three Central Javanese *slendro pathet*
- pathet nem** one of three Central Javanese *slendro* or *pelog pathet*
- pathet sanga** one of three Central Javanese *slendro pathet*
- pathetan** a type of instrumental Central Javanese piece with no regular beat (also see *sulukan*)
- patokan** most common *pola lagu* pieces in the Sundanese *gamelan* repertory
- peking** in Central Javanese *gamelan*, the highest-pitched member of the *saron* family (also called *saron panerus*); in Sundanese *degung*, fourteen-key metallophone (also called *titil* or *cempres*); in Sundanese *gamelan salendro*, metallophone similar to *saron* but tuned an octave higher
- pelog** a Javanese, Sundanese, and Cirebonese seven-pitch non-equidistant tuning system
- pelog degung** a Sundanese mode or *surupan*; also called *kobongan* or *mataraman*
- pelog jawar** a Sundanese 5-pitch subset of *pelog* with the pitches *barang*, *kenong*, *panelu*, *bem*, and *singgul*
- pelog liwung** a Sundanese 5-pitch subset of *pelog* with the pitches *barang*, *kenong*, *bungur*, *bem*, and *singgul*
- pelog sorog** a Sundanese 5-pitch subset of *pelog* with the pitches *petit*, *barang*, *kenong*, *panelu*, and *bem*
- pemade** *gangs*a one octave higher than the *ugal* in a Balinese *gong kebyar* ensemble
- penca silat** Sundanese martial arts
- pencon** *gamelan* instruments composed of bossed or knobbed gongs; also the name of the raised boss of such an instrument; also called *penclon*
- penclon** see *pencon*
- pendopo** Cirebonese, Javanese, or Sundanese pavilion with open walls
- perunggu** Indonesian word for bronze
- pesantren** Islamic school
- pesindhen** in Central Javanese *gamelan*, a female vocalist
- petit** a Sundanese pitch name in *pelog* (equivalent to *sorog*)
- phleng pūn ban** Thai “songs of the village” sung by men and women in isolated villages to the accompaniment of hand-clapping or percussion instruments
- phleng thao** Thai music genre that exploits the elasticity of underlying cycles
- pi** Thai double-reed wind instrument
- pi phat** Thai gong-chime ensemble

- pinn peat** Cambodian court music gong-chime ensemble
- pitch** the characteristic of sound that depends on how fast or slowly something vibrates to produce the sound that is perceived as high and low
- pokok** Balinese term for main melody; a main pillar pitch in a Sundanese *pola lagu* (also called *posisi kenong* or *kenong*)
- pola ibing** Sundanese *bajidoran* and *jaipongan* drumming's standard pattern
- pola lagu** pitch framework for a Sundanese piece or song; also called *tugu lagu* or *arkuh lagu*
- polos** one of the interlocking parts in Balinese *kotekan*
- polyphonic stratification** an approach to simultaneous variation in which musical lines are layered on top of each other like strata of rock so that each layer remains distinct
- pongdut** Sundanese musical hybrid combining *jaiPONGan* and *dangDUT*
- posisi kenong** a main pillar pitch in a Sundanese *pola lagu*; also called *pokok* or *kenong*
- pupuh** Sundanese term for a set of poetic forms; see *macapat*
- rabab** Persian-Arabic bowed instrument (probably prototype for various Southeast Asian bowed spike fiddles)
- ramé** Sundanese word for “lively, crowded, full of bustle”
- ramai** Indonesian word for “lively, crowded, full of bustle”
- ranat** Thai xylophones
- rancagan** “small pieces” in the Sundanese *gamelan* repertory; also called *lagu alit*, *lagu leutik*, *sekar alit*, or *rerenggongan*
- rebab** Javanese, Cirebonese, Balinese, and Sundanese two-string bowed string instrument with two brass strings and a skin-covered resonator
- rebana** Indonesian single-head frame drum; also called *terbang*
- rendo** Baduy bowed lute; also called *tarawangsa*
- reog** Sundanese comic entertainment form in which four performers provide their own accompaniment on *dog-dog*; also called *ogel*
- rerenggongan** “small pieces” in the Sundanese *gamelan* repertory; also called *lagu alit*, *lagu leutik*, *sekar alit*, or *rancagan*
- reyong** higher-pitched one-row gong chime played by four musicians in a Balinese *gong kebyar* ensemble; also the four hand-held gongs in a Balinese *beleganjur* ensemble
- rincik** in Sundanese *gamelan*, gong chime similar to *bonang* but tuned an octave higher
- roneat dek** keyed metallophone in Cambodian *pinn peat* ensemble
- roneat ek** xylophone in Cambodian *pinn peat* ensemble, higher in pitch than *roneat thung*
- roneat thung** xylophone in Cambodian *pinn peat* ensemble, lower in pitch than *roneat ek*
- ronggeng** Sundanese female singer-dancers

- rongkeng** rice bundles carried on a pole to make a sort of musical instrument in Sundanese rice harvest festivals
- salendro** a Sundanese five-pitch equidistant tuning system (equivalent to Javanese *slendro*)
- sampak** a type of Central Javanese piece
- sampho** drum in Cambodian *pinn peat* ensemble
- sanggar** Sundanese private teaching studios; Balinese music clubs
- sangsih** one of the interlocking parts in Balinese *kotekan*
- saron** in Central Javanese *gamelan*, a generic term for a family of six- or seven-keyed metallophones; in Sundanese *gamelan*, six- or seven-keyed metallophone
- saron barung** in Central Javanese *gamelan*, the medium-pitched member of the *saron* family
- saron demung** in Central Javanese *gamelan*, the lowest-pitched member of the *saron* family
- saron panerus** in Central Javanese *gamelan*, the highest-pitched member of the *saron* family; also called *peking*
- sarune** in Toba Batak *gondang sabangunan*, double-reed wind instrument
- sasandu** tube zither from the eastern Indonesian island of Roti
- satengah wilet** one-half *wilet* (see *wilet*); also called *kering*
- saw** Northern Thai repartee songs
- sawilet** one *wilet* (see *wilet*)
- scale** a theoretical arrangement, in pitch order, of pitches within a tuning system
- sekar ageung** “great pieces” in the Sundanese *gamelan* repertory; also called *lagu gede*
- sekar alit** “small pieces” in the Sundanese *gamelan* repertory; also called *lagu alit*, *lagu leutik*, *rancagan*, or *rerenggongan*
- sekaten** festival marking the birthday of the Islamic prophet Muhammed
- selukat** metallophone with many keys in Sundanese *goong renteng*; also called *gangsa*
- sembah** Javanese, Sundanese, and Cirebonese gesture of greeting
- sidekah bumi** Cirebonese ceremony of blessing of earth before the farmers begin to work in the fields
- sila** in Sundanese dance and etiquette, sitting cross-legged
- simultaneous variation** performing concurrently two or more melodic lines, each of which is recognizable as a variant of the same basic tune
- sinden** female singer-dancers for Sundanese *bajidoran*
- singgul** a Sundanese pitch name
- sisindiran** light Sundanese poetic form
- siter** in Central Javanese *gamelan*, a zither with metal strings; also called *celempung*



- siyem** in Central Javanese *gamelan*, a hanging gong (smaller than *gong ageng*); also called *gong suwukan* or *gong siyem*
- skor thomm** drum in Cambodian *pinn peat* ensemble
- slendro** a Javanese five-pitch equidistant tuning system; equivalent to Sundanese *salendro*
- slenthem** in Central Javanese *gamelan*, the lowest-pitched member of the *gender* family, with six to eight keys
- sorog** a Sundanese mode or *surupan* (also called *madenda*); a Sundanese pitch name in *pelog* (equivalent to *petit*)
- sralai** double-reed wind instruments in Cambodian *pinn peat* ensemble
- srepegan** a type Central Javanese piece
- suling** Javanese, Cirebonese, Sundanese, or Balinese bamboo flute; in Central Javanese *gamelan*, a vertical bamboo flute with four (*slendro*) or five (*pelog*) holes; in Sundanese *degung*, four-hole bamboo flute (*suling degung*); in *tembang Sunda*, a six-hole bamboo flute (*suling panjang*); in Cirebon, often a transverse (side-blown) flute (*suling miring*)
- suling gambuh** large bamboo flutes played in Balinese *gamelan gambuh*
- sulukan** a type of vocal Central Javanese piece with no regular beat (see also *pathetan*)
- surupan** various Sundanese modes and the practice of using them
- tabla** small, bongo-like double drum used in *dangdut*; also called *calti*
- taganing** in Toba Batak *gondang sabangunan*, a set of five tuned drums
- talempong** Minangkabau gong-chime ensemble from West Sumatra
- tanji** Sundanese music performed on Western brass instruments
- taphon** Thai drums in *pi phat* ensemble
- tarawangsa** Baduy (Sundanese) bowed lute; also called *rendo*
- tari klasik** Sundanese classical dance
- tari kursus** Sundanese solo male dance based on *tayub* dancing; also called *ibing keurseus*
- tarikh selampit** epic storytelling tradition from Kelantan, Malaysia
- tarling** Cirebonese ensemble featuring guiTAR and suLING
- tarompet** double-reed wind instrument in a *kendang penca* ensemble
- tatalu** instrumental overture to a Sundanese *ketuk tilu* performance
- tayuban** Cirebonese and Javanese men's social dancing; Sundanese aristocratic men's social dancing and dance events with *gamelan* accompaniment
- tembang** in Sundanese usage, a formal style of singing refined poetry; traditional form of Central Javanese poetry
- tembang Sunda** Sundanese sung poetry; also called *Cianjuran*
- tengahan** medium tempo section of a Cirebonese *topeng* dance
- tepak** sound of drums; in Sundanese *penca silat*, a specific drum ostinato pattern

- tepak kocak** humorous Sundanese drum patterns
- tepak melem** florid, subtle style of Sundanese hand drumming for instrumental music or vocal accompaniment
- terbang** single-head frame drum; also called *rebana*
- tilingtit** smallest *dog-dog* in a Sundanese *reog* ensemble
- timbre** quality or “tone color” of a sound
- titil** in Sundanese *degung*, fourteen-key metallophone; also called *peking* or *cempres*; in *gamelan sekaten*, a small, high-pitched keyed metallophone
- topeng** Javanese, Sundanese, Cirebonese, or Balinese performance involving masks
- tortor** dance that accompanies Toba Batak *gondang sabangunan*
- tremolo** minute variations in volume
- triping** fast, agitated drum pattern in Sundanese *bajidoran* that accompanies slow, swaying movements (from the English word “tripping”)
- trompong** lower-pitched one-row gong chime played by one musician in Balinese *gong kebyar* ensemble
- tugu** a Sundanese pitch name (equivalent to *barang*)
- tugu lagu** pitch framework for a Sundanese piece or song; also called *pola lagu* or *arkuh lagu*
- tumbuk** a pitch that two Indonesian tuning systems have in common
- tuning system** the interval relationships between all the pitches available on an instrument or an ensemble
- ugal** lead *gangs*a in Balinese *gong kebyar* ensemble
- upacara** Indonesian word for “ceremony”
- upacara adat** in general, any traditional ceremony; in modern Sundanese usage, a special kind of performance for a wedding (also called *upacara khusus*)
- upacara khusus** see *upacara adat*
- vibrato** minute variations in pitch
- wali sanga** the nine saints of legend and history who brought Islam to Java
- wanda anyar** “new style” approach to Sundanese dancing characterized by continuous movement
- wanda klasik** classic (traditional) approach to Sundanese dancing characterized by alternating stillness with dynamic drumming and movement
- wangsalan** light Sundanese poetic form
- wawayangan** *ketuk tilu* dance performed by *ronggeng*
- wayang** Javanese, Sundanese, Cirebonese, and Balinese term for theatrical forms based on particular epic stories, including puppet theater
- wayang golek** Sundanese, Javanese, and Cirebonese rod puppet theater
- wayang kulit** Cirebonese, Balinese, and Javanese shadow puppet theater
- wela** omitted *kempul* stroke in a Javanese colotomic form

**wilahan** *gamelan* instruments with slab keys

**wilet** Sundanese term for expanding and contracting *pola lagu* pieces; the more *wilet*, the more time between pillar pitches. Possibilities include *satengah wilet* (one-half *wilet*), *sawilet* (one *wilet*), *dua wilet* (two *wilet*), *empat wilet* (four *wilet*), and *dalapan wilet* (eight *wilet*)

**wiraswara** male vocalist in a Sundanese *gamelan*; also called *juru alok*

**xylophone** generic term for percussion instrument with wooden keys arranged in a row

**zaman kaset** period in the 1970s and 1980s when local Sundanese recording companies released many commercial cassettes of traditional Sundanese music; golden age of cassette recordings

# *Additional Resources*

## FURTHER READING

### ***Books on Southeast Asia in General***

Brandon, James. 1967. *Theater in Southeast Asia*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Despite its age, this compendium of theatrical forms of Southeast Asia remains an excellent introduction to this rich topic.

Foley, Kathy, ed. 1992. *Essays on Southeast Asian Performing Arts: Local Manifestations and Cross-Cultural Implications*. Center for Southeast Asia Studies, Occasional Paper No. 18. Berkeley: University of California at Berkeley Centers for South and Southeast Asian Studies.

This volume includes essays on music, dance, and theater from Indonesia and the Philippines. Contributors include Ricardo Trimillos, Kathy Foley, Sue Carole DeVale, Benjamin Brinner, and Jody Diamond. Foley's article on Cirebonese *sintren* (a kind of trance performance) and Trimillos's piece on lowland Philippines *pasyon* (a Christian passion performance) are of particular interest because they illuminate topics covered nowhere else in the literature.

Ghulam-Sarwar, Yousof. 1994. *Dictionary of Traditional South-East Asian Theater*. Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press.

A laudable but uneven effort to compile all sorts of information about Southeast Asian music, dance, and theater into one volume, this dictionary includes brief descriptive entries for terms and genres as well as many black-and-white photographs. It is especially strong in its coverage of Malaysian topics.

Lockard, Craig A. 1998. *Dance of Life: Popular Music and Politics in Southeast Asia*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.

Lockard compiled virtually everything ever written in English about popular music in Southeast Asia to prepare this book. Each Southeast Asian country is allotted a single chapter. The best chapter is on the Philippines, the area where Lockard has the most personal experience. The other chapters are quite good, however, and the bibliography is truly exceptional.

Manuel, Peter. 1988. *Popular Musics of the Non-Western World*. New York: Oxford University Press.

The sections on Southeast Asia in this perennial favorite are less comprehensive and considerably more out of date than Lockard's *Dance of Life*, but the concise discussions nevertheless provide a quick introduction to many Southeast Asian popular music genres.

Miettinen, Jukka O. 1992. *Classical Dance and Theater in South-East Asia*. Singapore: Oxford University Press.

Miettinen's introductory chapter provides a concise introduction to the layers of influences that have shaped Southeast Asian music, dance, and theater. In subsequent chapters she provides overviews of theater and dance in Burma, Thailand, Java, Bali, mainland Southeast Asia, and Vietnam, illustrated with many beautiful photographs.

Miller, Terry E., and Williams, Sean, eds. 1998. *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music, Vol. 4: Southeast Asia*. New York: Garland.

Probably the most comprehensive single work on Southeast Asian music, this volume includes not only articles covering the musical traditions of each of the countries in the region, but a host of introductory articles presenting Southeast Asian geography, history, and cultural traits as well. The comprehensive guides to publications, recordings, and films and videos are particularly useful. A single CD, with some otherwise difficult-to-find musical examples, accompanies the dictionary.

Reid, Anthony. 1988. *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce, 1450–1680, Vol. 1: The Lands Below the Winds*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

For those intrigued by Southeast Asian history, Reid provides a fascinating account of many facets of Southeast Asian life around the time that Europeans first came to the area. The chapter "Festivals and Amusements" includes accounts of music, dance, theater, and sports from all over Southeast Asia, drawn from a variety of primary sources.

Sadie, Stanley, ed. 2001. *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 2nd ed.* London: Macmillan.

This most recent edition of the venerable *New Grove Dictionary* includes an article devoted to Southeast Asian music in general, substantial articles covering each of the individual countries of Southeast Asia, and a variety of brief biographies of important Southeast Asian musicians. Each article includes a bibliography. As the standard musical reference work in the English-speaking world, this excellent resource is available in most libraries; online access also is available in many places. If the second edition (published in the year 2001) is not available, the first edition of 1980 includes good coverage of Southeast Asia as well.

Taylor, Eric. 1989. *Musical Instruments of South-East Asia*. Singapore: Oxford University Press.

This slim volume opens with brief chapters covering the cultural, historical, and musical background of the region. The rest of the book names and describes a host of Southeast Asian musical instruments. There are some particularly striking color plates, and quite a few black-and-white photographs as well.

### ***Books on Indonesia***

Cribb, R. B. 2000. *Historical Atlas of Indonesia*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.

Cribb makes accessible the complications of the history of Indonesia and surrounding areas by presenting the movements of peoples, religions, technologies, and empires in a series of colorful maps accompanied by well-written text.

Holt, Claire. 1967. *Art in Indonesia: Continuities and Change*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Holt focuses on plastic arts (sculpture and painting), but spends considerable time examining performing arts traditions of Java and Bali, and, to a lesser extent, other parts of Indonesia. Her historical overview of Indonesian art, as well as her succinct summaries of the byzantine plots of the various Indonesian epic stories, including the Ramayana and Mahabharata, are particularly useful.

Sutton, R. Anderson. 2002. *Calling Back the Spirit: Music, Dance, and Cultural Politics in Lowland South Sulawesi*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Sutton describes how musical activities in Sulawesi enact a dialogue between local meanings and Indonesian nationalist hegemony by analyzing the activities and work of several prominent musicians and dancers. His up-to-date summaries of Indonesian nationalist ideas about the performing arts as well as current ethnomusicological thinking about issues of authenticity are helpful for any student of Indonesian music. The book includes a CD with representative tracks from the artists covered in the text.

### ***Books on Khmer/Cambodian Music***

Sam, Sam-Ang, and Campbell, Patricia Shehan. 1991. *Silent Temples, Songful Hearts: Traditional Music of Cambodia*. Danbury: World Music Press.

Sam-Ang Sam and his family are prominent Cambodian artists living in the United States. The book introduces, in simple language aimed at grade-school audiences, Cambodian and Khmer history, language, culture, and musical instruments. The heart of the book is fourteen “guided listening experiences,” coordinated with an accompanying cassette tape, that provide readers with some in-depth information about specific Cambodian pieces from a variety of genres.

### ***Books on Thai Music***

Dhanit Yupho. 1952. *Thai Musical Instruments*. 2nd ed., translated by David Morton. Bangkok: Fine Arts Department.

After an extremely questionable five-page historical overview of Thai music history (which doesn’t even mention Thai music’s debt to Khmer music), the author provides an exhaustive catalogue of Thai musical instruments, grouped into percussion, wind, and string instruments, illustrated with line drawings.

Morton, David. 1968. *The Traditional Music of Thailand: Introduction, Commentary, and Analyses*. Los Angeles: Regents of the University of California.

This substantial booklet served as the liner notes for a recording of Thai classical music released in the 1970s by the Institute of Ethnomusicology at UCLA. It includes a succinct and useful essay on Thai classical music (illustrated with many black-and-white photographs) as well as commentary and transcriptions on the individual pieces included on the recording.

———. 1976. *The Traditional Music of Thailand*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Morton approaches Thai classical music quite systematically, first attending to fundamentals (tuning systems, melody, and rhythm), then moving on to musical instruments, then discussing his own ideas about modes in Thai music, and finally addressing forms and compositional techniques. Morton’s work is outdated, but his comprehensive documentary approach to the Thai classical music scene of the 1950s and 1960s is still quite useful.

Myers-Moro, Pamela. 1993. *Thai Music and Musicians in Contemporary Bangkok*. Berkeley: Centers for South and Southeast Asian Studies, University of California at Berkeley.

Myers-Moro focuses on the social institutions around Thai classical music in modern Thailand, including how music is taught and learned, and

modern Thai contexts for classical music. She also covers musical instruments, ensembles, repertoires, and music theory.

Wong, Deborah, guest editor. 1991. *Balungan*, Vol. 5, No. 1.

This issue of *Balungan* (published by the American Gamelan Institute) is devoted to performing arts of Mainland Southeast Asia and includes articles on Thai music by Deborah Wong and Pamela Myers-Moro and an interview with Sam-Ang Sam by Jarrad Powell, as well as descriptions of some Thai music study groups at Kent State and Southwestern Universities.

———. 2001. *Sounding the Center: History and Aesthetics in Thai Buddhist Performance*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Deborah Wong uses the Thai ritual (called *wai khruu*) that honors music and dance teachers as an entry point for understanding the power of Thai classical music and dance as it is articulated in discourse about music as well as in musical activities. Along the way she dispenses a wealth of technical and cultural details about classical Thai music as it is practiced in modern Thailand.

### ***Books on Philippine Kulintang Music***

1996. *Asian Music* (Journal of the Society for Asian Music), Vol. 27, No. 2.

Almost the entire Spring/Summer 1996 issue of *Asian Music* is devoted to *kulintang* traditions of the southern Philippines. The various articles cover both musical and cultural topics. Maguindanaon *kulintang* music receives especially good coverage, with articles by Danongan S. Kalanduyan, Karen Posner, Scott Scholz, and Yoshitaka Terada. Articles by Usopay Cadar, Robert Garfias, and Steven Otto treat Maranao *kolintang* music, and Usopay Cadar contributes a piece on *kolintang* in the United States.

Bañas y Castillo, Raymundo. 1969. *Pilipino Music and Theater*. Quezon City: Manlapaz Publishing Co.

Bañas y Castillo devotes a scant two pages to southern Philippine gong chime music in this comprehensive study of Western-influenced music in the Philippines.

Maceda, Jose. 1998. *Gongs & Bamboo: A Panorama of Philippine Music Instruments*. Diliman, Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press.

Maceda opens with a short introduction to musical styles of the northern and southern Philippines (except the musical traditions of mainstream Christian Philippines society), including a comparative explication of a variety of southern Philippine *kulintang* ensembles. The bulk of the book is black-and-white photographs of indigenous Philippine musical



instruments (including almost 30 pages of kulintang photographs from various regions).

Pfeiffer, William R. 1976. *Filipino music: Indigenous [sic], Folk, Modern*. Dumaguete City, Philippines: Silliman Music Foundation.

Pfeiffer spent a lifetime lovingly collecting information about music from the Philippines; this book contains most of his life's work. The coverage is quite uneven, especially with regard to southern Philippine topics, but the book contains much useful information.

### ***Books on Java in General***

Hood, Mantle. 1980. *Music of the Roaring Sea*. Wilhelmshaven, Netherlands: Edition Heinrichshofen.

———. 1984. *Legacy of the Roaring Sea*. Wilhelmshaven, Netherlands: Edition Heinrichshofen.

———. 1988. *Paragon of the Roaring Sea*. Wilhelmshaven, Netherlands: Edition Heinrichshofen.

Mantle Hood was among the first Western ethnomusicologists to examine Javanese music; this trilogy represents the culmination of his life's work.

The "Roaring Sea" of this trilogy's titles is the three-pitch heirloom *gamelan munggang* in the kraton Yogyakarta which bears the proper name Kangjeng Kyai Guntur Laut (Roaring Sea). The first volume, after an introductory essay on modern Indonesia, explores Javanese prehistory to posit a fanciful origin story for *gamelan* instruments in Java. The second volume speculates about medieval developments in gamelan music. The final volume lays out Hood's ideas about Javanese modes and improvisation.

Kunst, J. 1973. *Music in Java*. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff.

Jaap Kunst spent many years in Java in the early part of the century; this book is an encyclopedic compendium of all the data he collected during that time. The 1973 edition was updated by Ernst Heins and includes a very comprehensive bibliography up to that date. Much of Kunst's time in Java was spent in West Java; nevertheless, the bulk of the book focuses on Central Javanese court traditions. Despite its age, Kunst's book remains a classic; its pre-Independence perspective is especially useful for those undertaking historical research into Javanese music.

### ***Books on Cirebonese Music***

Materials in English on Cirebonese performing arts are rare and difficult to obtain. Scholars who have produced materials in English include Pamela

Rogers-Aguiniga, Michael Wright, Richard North, Endo Suanda, and Matthew Cohen. General introductions to Cirebonese music, dance, and theater are available in the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed. (written by Matthew Cohen) and the *Garland Encyclopedia of World Music's* Southeast Asia volume (contributed by Endo Suanda). Both of these articles include bibliographies that can direct a reader to some additional resources. In addition, the following books are available in many libraries.

Abdurachman, Paramita R., ed. 1982. *Cerbon*. Jakarta: Yayasan Mitra Budaya Indonesia, Sinar Harapan.

This collection of essays, written by Indonesian scholars and experts and presented in the Indonesian language with reasonably accurate English translations, covers a variety of topics about Cirebonese history, culture, arts, and even cuisine. The short chapter on music by Bernard Suryabrata briefly addresses *sekaten*, *gamelan*, and *wayang*.

North, Richard, guest editor. 1988. *Balungan*, Vol. 3, No. 3.

This entire issue of the periodical *Balungan* (published by the American Gamelan Institute) is devoted to Cirebonese performing arts and represents one of the only sources of information in English on these topics. It includes articles on *gamelan* and *wayang* by Richard North, an article on *topeng* dancing by Endo Suanda, and a description of *tarling* by Michael Wright.

### ***Books on Central Javanese Music***

Western scholars who focused on Javanese music in the first half of the twentieth century include Jaap Kunst and Mantle Hood. A host of more recent scholars have produced plentiful materials in English covering Central Javanese gamelan-related topics. The introductory articles in the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed. (written by several authors) and the Southeast Asia volume of the *Garland Encyclopedia of World Music* (by R. Anderson Sutton) include excellent bibliographies that can direct a reader to many appropriate resources. The books by Jennifer Lindsay and Neil Sorrell described below are introductory texts aimed at general readers; the remaining books are more specialized investigations of specific topics.

Arps, Bernard. 1992. *Tembang in Two Traditions: Performance and Interpretation of Javanese Literature*. London: SOAS.

Arps covers central and eastern Javanese traditions of *tembang*—sung poetry in *macapat* meters—in great detail, focusing on performance practice in the areas around the cities of Yogyakarta and Banyuwangi. His goal is to come to an understanding of how this literary and performance tradition has meaning for its participants.

Becker, Judith. 1973. *Traditional Music in Modern Java: Gamelan in a Changing Society*. Honolulu: University Press of Hawai'i.

The background and works of two innovative Central Javanese composers (Ki Nartosabdhdo and K. R. T. Wasitodipuro) provide a framework for Becker to explore what constitutes "tradition" in the context of Javanese gamelan music.

———. ed. 1984. *Karawitan: Source Readings in Javanese Gamelan and Vocal Music, Vol. 1*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies.

———. 1987. *Karawitan: Source Readings in Javanese Gamelan and Vocal Music, Vol. 2*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies.

———. 1988. *Karawitan: Source Readings in Javanese Gamelan and Vocal Music, Vol. 3*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies.

This three-volume compendium of translations of papers by important Javanese musicians, theorists, and aestheticians, translated by gamelan-savvy ethnomusicologists, provides a valuable peek into the aesthetics of Javanese gamelan as perceived by insiders. The first two volumes present important essays, mostly from the twentieth century; the third volume provides a glossary, notations of the pieces mentioned in the texts, biographies of the Javanese authors, a bibliography, and an index.

———. 1993. *Gamelan Stories: Tantrism, Islam, and Aesthetic in Central Java*. Monographs in Southeast Asian Studies. Program for Southeast Asian Studies, Arizona State University.

In this esoteric study, Becker digs deep into Javanese history, philosophy, mysticism, and religious attitudes to interpret the manifold meanings of the Central Javanese court dance called *bedhaya*.

Brinner, Benjamin. 1995. *Knowing Music, Making Music: Javanese Gamelan and the Theory of Musical Competence and Interaction*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Brinner outlines a general methodology for examining how musicians interact during performance and a framework for understanding musical competence. He illustrates most of his points with examples drawn from Central Javanese gamelan, providing a rich and detailed look at Javanese aesthetics and musical style along the way.

Keeler, Ward. 1987. *Javanese Shadow Plays, Javanese Selves*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

In this classic study, Keeler convincingly demonstrates that Central Javanese *wayang kulit* (shadow puppet theater) models Javanese ideas

about power, status, and interpersonal relationships. The book is rich in ethnographic detail about *dalang* (puppeteers), musicians, and the contexts in which wayang performances take place.

Lindsay, Jennifer. 1979. *Javanese Gamelan*. Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press.

Lindsay's slim volume provides a good general introduction to Central Javanese court gamelan, with emphases on instruments and cultural context.

Sorrell, Neil. 1990. *A Guide to the Gamelan*. Portland, Ore.: Amadeus Press.

This brief introduction focuses on aspects of *gamelan* that will interest fans of music composed by Westerners for gamelan instruments as well as of traditional Indonesian gamelan music. It begins with an overview of gamelan music in Europe and North America, and provides apt Western analogies for Javanese musical and cultural concepts. There is a good overview of instruments, basics of gamelan musical rudiments (such as form, tuning, and rhythm), as well as detailed explanations of various instrumental parts. The book provides only a few pages of cultural and historical background, however.

Sumarsam. 1995. *Gamelan: Cultural Interaction and Musical Development in Central Java*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Sumarsam, who is both a kraton-trained Javanese musician and a US-trained ethnomusicologist, takes readers on a breathtaking tour of the history of Javanese musicians' interactions with Western modes of thought; he ultimately argues that modern Central Javanese gamelan music, despite its distinctly non-Western sound, was profoundly influenced by European musical thinking.

Sutton, R. Anderson. 1993. *Variation in Central Javanese Gamelan Music: Dynamics of a Steady State*. Monograph Series on Southeast Asia Special Report No. 28. DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press.

Sutton explores the processes that allow musical variation and which lead to stylistic changes in Central Javanese court-style gamelan. Along the way he provides excellent and detailed insights into the cultural context of gamelan music, the structure of gamelan pieces, and the particulars of how individual musicians go about creating their own realizations of gamelan pieces.

### ***Books on Eastern Javanese Music***

Only a few scholars have produced books and articles on eastern Javanese music. A general introduction to music, dance, and theater in eastern Java is avail-

able in the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed. (written by Michael Crawford).

Purwacarita, Sarib. 1998. *Released from Kala's Grip: A Wayang Exorcism Performance from East Java*. Translated and with an introduction by Victoria M. Clara van Groenendael. Jakarta: Lontar Foundation.

The bulk of this book is a transcription and translation of a Javanese *wayang kulit* play performed by *dalang* Sarib Purwacarita in Kediri, East Java. Groenendael's introduction outlines some similarities and differences between Central and eastern Javanese wayang conventions and discusses the significance of *ruwatan* (exorcism) performances.

Sutton, R. Anderson. 1991. *Traditions of Gamelan Music in Java: Musical Pluralism and Regional Identity*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Sutton discusses regional styles in Javanese music traditions, with coverage not only of the court cities of Yogyakarta and Surakarta, but of two eastern Javanese regions (Semarang in northeastern Java, and the Banyuwangi area at the eastern end of the island). Although there is a pervasive influence from the Surakarta style throughout central and eastern Java, Sutton makes a case for the ongoing cultivation of regional styles as well.

### ***Books on Balinese Music***

The arts and culture of the island of Bali have captured the interest of Western scholars for over a century; among the early generation of scholars writing about Bali are illustrious names such as Gregory Bateson, Clifford Geertz, and Margaret Mead. Writers on music from this early period include Colin McPhee and Walter Spies. Many more recent scholars of Balinese music have published plentiful materials in English. General introductions to Balinese music, dance, and theater are available in the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed. (written by Lisa Gold) and the *Garland Encyclopedia of World Music's* Southeast Asia volume (by David Harnish).

Bakan, Michael B. 1999. *Music of Death and New Creation: Experiences in the World of Balinese Gamelan Beleganjur*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Bakan begins and concludes the book with stories about his own involvement with Balinese music, letting his readers benefit from his own process of coming to understand music in a Balinese way by learning to play (and to hear) *beleganjur* music. In the middle chapters, he introduces the musical style and cultural context of the beleganjur ensemble, as well as how both the context and the style have responded to changes in Balinese society, including modernization, the rise of the tourist industry, and feminism.

Belo, Jane, ed. 1970. *Traditional Balinese Culture*. New York: Columbia University Press.

This collection includes a variety of essays on music, dance, and theater by some of the first Western scholars to take an interest in Balinese culture in the early twentieth century, including Katharine Mereson, Gregory Bateson, Margaret Mead, Colin McPhee, Beryl de Zoete, and Walter Spies. Their observations and ideas have helped shape Western views of Balinese culture (and even have affected how Balinese view themselves).

Herbst, Edward. 1997. *Voices in Bali: Energies and Perceptions in Vocal Music and Dance Theater*. Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England.

Herbst investigates the way that performers in Bali learn and improvisationally perform the “pickup” theatrical genres called *topeng* and *arja*, with ample focus on the spiritual and mystical sides of Balinese performance. The book includes a CD with musical examples not generally available on commercial releases.

McPhee, Colin. 1966. *Music in Bali: A Study in Form and Instrumental Organization in Balinese Orchestral Music*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

McPhee’s magnum opus is a detailed survey of Balinese musical styles and contexts as he experienced them in the 1930s. McPhee’s detailed transcriptions and analyses provide a look at Balinese music as it was during the period before the advent of tourism and Indonesian nationalism.

———. 1946. *A House in Bali*. New York: The John Day Company.

This engaging volume, in which the author relates his adventures setting up a household in Bali and studying music, reads like a novel, yet includes excellent descriptions of musical ensembles, styles, activities, aesthetics, and contexts.

Tenzer, Michael. 1998. *Balinese Music*, revised and updated edition. Hong Kong: Periplus Editions.

This beautifully illustrated book (originally published in 1991), clearly and systematically introduces neophytes to Balinese gamelan music. Chapters on history, instruments and tunings, and basic musical processes provide a background for subsequent discussions of one complete piece (music for the Baris dance), other gamelan ensembles, and the place of music in Balinese society. Tenzer’s beautiful prose is a joy to read, and the luscious color photographs are a treat for the eyes.

———. 2000. *Gamelan Gong Kebyar: The Art of Twentieth-Century Balinese Music*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Tenzer’s prizewinning investigation of *gong kebyar* in Bali delves deeply into the history, development, formal structure, and meaning of this dynamic musical style. The detailed analyses of *kebyar* pieces are not for the faint of

heart, but there is something for everybody in this massive, well-organized, and well-written treatise. The book comes with two CDs that illustrate the sound examples.

Vitale, Wayne, guest editor. 1990. *Balungan*, Vol. 4, No. 2.

This issue of *Balungan* (published by the American Gamelan Institute) is devoted to Balinese performing arts. It includes an informative article on *kotekan* by Wayne Vitale and an interview with Balinese musician and dancer I Wayan Dibia.

### ***Books on Sundanese Music and Dance***

Scholars who focus on Sundanese performing arts have authored quite a few theses, dissertations, and journal articles on many Sundanese topics, but readily available books cover only *tembang Sunda* and *wayang golek*. General introductions to Sundanese music, dance, and theater are available in the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed. (written by Simon Cook) and the *Garland Encyclopedia of World Music's* Southeast Asia volume (by Sean Williams); both of these articles include excellent bibliographies that can direct a reader to many appropriate resources. In addition, the following books are available in many libraries.

Foley, Kathy, guest editor. 1993. *Balungan*, Vol. 5, No. 2.

This issue of *Balungan* (published by the American Gamelan Institute) is devoted to Sundanese performing arts. It includes articles on *pantun Sunda* by Andrew Weintraub, *tembang Sunda* by Cary Young and Marcus Kaufman, on traditional learning by Sean Williams, and interviews by Kathy Foley with *dalang* Asep Sunandar, dancer Irawati Durban Arjo, and scholar Endo Suanda, as well as a score and analysis of Nano S.'s gamelan piece "Warna" by Linda Burman-Hall.

Herbert, Mimi, with Nur S. Rahardjo. 2002. *Voices of the Puppet Masters: the Wayang Golek Theater of Indonesia*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.

Mimi Herbert explores the world of Sundanese wayang golek rod puppet theater by telling the life stories of several performers and artists involved in the wayang world. The text is not deep, but is accurate for the most part. The book's chief value lies in its profusion of lavish photographs of musicians, *dalang*, and puppets.

Williams, Sean. 2001. *The Sound of the Ancestral Ship: Highland Music of West Java*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Williams uses one musician's reference to the *kacapi* (and, by extension, the music) as a vessel that carries its listeners into a nostalgic past as a

metaphor to frame her discussion of the social and musical meaning of *tembang Sunda*. Although her book does not have the encyclopedic breadth of information of Wim van Zanten's book on the same topic, it is more approachable, easier to read, and comes with a CD.

Zanten, Wim van. 1989. *Sundanese Music in the Cianjuran Style: Anthropological and Musicological Aspects of Tembang Sunda*. Dordrecht, Holland: Foris Publications.

Van Zanten includes practically every piece of information about tembang Sunda he ever discovered in this musical and cultural examination of the genre, which covers poetic forms, musical instruments and techniques, history, and extremely technical details about tuning systems and modes. An appendix includes several tembang song texts in the original Sundanese with fine English translations.

#### FURTHER LISTENING

##### *Recordings of Indonesian Music in General*

*Music of Indonesia* series (Smithsonian Folkways Recordings)

Ethnomusicologist Philip Yampolsky recorded, compiled, and annotated this astonishing series of twenty compact discs; the series includes many tracks from Indonesia's lesser known islands and cultures. Each CD comes with a comprehensive and authoritative booklet which provides impeccably-researched historical, contextual, and bibliographic information available nowhere else. Smithsonian Folkways also has produced an inexpensive sampler CD which contains selected cuts from all of the releases in the series.

Some of the CDs are of particular interest to readers of this book on *gamelan* music because they include recordings of songs or genres discussed in the various chapters. *Vol. 1: East Java 1* features *gandrung* music (as discussed in Chapter Two). *Vol. 2: Indonesian Popular Music* contains some examples of *dangdut* songs composed by Rhoma Irama (as discussed in Chapter Four). And *Vol. 4: Music of Nias and North Sumatra* includes Toba Batak *gondang* music (as discussed in Chapter One). Sound samples, brief descriptions, lyrics transcriptions, and supplemental notes for each CD in the series are available on the internet by following the "Indonesia Series" link at: <http://www.folkways.si.edu/>  
The twenty volumes in the series are listed below.

Vol. 1: *East Java 1—Songs Before Dawn: Gandrung Banyuwangi* (SFW 40055, 1991)



- Vol. 2: *Indonesian Popular Music—Kroncong Dangdut and Langgam Jawa* (SFW 40056, 1991)
- Vol. 3: *Music from the Outskirts of Jakarta: Gambang Kromong* (SFW 40057, 1991)
- Vol. 4: *Music of Nias and North Sumatra: Hoho, Gendang Karo, Gondang Toba* (SFW 40420, 1992)
- Vol. 5: *Betawi & Sundanese Music of the North Coast of Java* (SFW 40421, 1994)
- Vol. 6: *Night Music of West Sumatra: Saluang, Rabab Pariaman, Dendang Pauah* (SFW 40422, 1994)
- Vol. 7: *Music from the Forests of Riau & Mentawai* (SFW 40423, 1994)
- Vol. 8: *Vocal & Instrumental Music from East & Central Flores* (FW 40424, 1994)
- Vol. 9: *Vocal & Instrumental Music from Central & West Flores* (SFW 40425, 1994)
- Vol. 10: *Music of Biak, Irian Jaya: Wor, Church Songs, Yospan* (SFW 40426, 1996)
- Vol. 11: *Melayu Music of Sumatra and the Riau Islands* (SFW 40427, 1996)
- Vol. 12: *Gongs and Vocal Music from Sumatra* (SFW 40428, 1996)
- Vol. 13: *Kalimantan Strings* (SFW 40429, 1997)
- Vol. 14: *Lombok, Kalimantan, Banyumas: Little-known Forms of Gamelan and Wayang* (SFW 40441, 1997)
- Vol. 15: *South Sulawesi Strings* (SFW 40442, 1997)
- Vol. 16: *Music from the Southeast: Sumbawa, Sumba, Timor* (SFW 40443, 1998)
- Vol. 17: *Kalimantan: Dayak Ritual and Festival Music* (SFW 40444, 1998)
- Vol. 18: *Sulawesi: Festivals, Funerals, and Work* (SFW 40445, 1999)
- Vol. 19: *Music of Maluku: Halmahera, Bura, Kei* (SFW 40446, 1999)
- Vol. 20: *Indonesian Guitars* (SFW 40447, 1999)

*Rough Guide to the Music of Indonesia* (World Music Network in association with Rough Guides, NCOS and New Internationalist, RGNET 1055 CD, 2000)

Rough Guide CDs generally feature world music in a pop vein; this release is no different. It includes a variety of fine tracks culled mostly from CDs released commercially in Indonesia, with a particular emphasis on songs from West Java. Of special interest to readers of this book are the *dangdut* tracks from Rhoma Irama and Elyy Sukaesih, and the Sundanese *degung*, *kacapi-suling*, and *tembang Sunda* tracks. The liner notes, unfortunately, provide no enlightening information at all.

*Sampler: Indonesia South Pacific: Music from the Nonesuch Explorer Series* (Nonesuch 79794, 2003)

The venerable Nonesuch Explorer Series includes a number of recordings

of Javanese, Balinese, and Sundanese music; this sampler includes representative tracks from several recordings. Not all of the choices are among the best the series has to offer, but it does include at least some favorite Javanese tracks (*ketawang* “Puspawarna” and *bubaran* “Udan Mas”), a wonderful Sundanese cut (“Tonggeret”), and a few good Balinese examples.

### ***Recordings of Toba Batak/Gondang Music***

*Batak of North Sumatra* (New Albion Records NA 046 1992)

These tracks are recordings of a Sumatran troupe that toured the United States in 1990; they include feature examples of Toba (*gondang sabangunan* and *gondang hasapi*), Karo, and Mandailing music.

*Music of Indonesia, Vol. 4: Music of Nias and North Sumatra: Hoho, Gendang Karo, Gondang Toba* (Smithsonian Folkways 40420, 1992)

*Music of Indonesia, Vol. 12: Gongs and Vocal Music from Sumatra* (SFW 40428, 1996)

These two volumes from the Music of Indonesia series provide excellent recordings (with excellent liner notes) of gong ensemble music from several Sumatran ethnic groups. *Vol. 4: Music of Nias and North Sumatra* features the Toba Batak *gondang sabangunan* and *gondang hasapi* ensembles described in Chapter One.

*Sumatra (Indonésie): Musiques des Batak Karo, Toba et Simalungun* (Inédit W 260061, 1995)

This excellent CD features a multiethnic Batak troupe performing five different Sumatran ensembles; the recording was made while the group toured France. It features musical styles from three different Batak ethnic groups, including the Toba Batak *gondang sabangunan* ensemble described in Chapter One.

### ***Recordings of Khmer/Cambodian Music***

*Homrong: The National Dance Company of Cambodia* (Real World 2-91734, 1991)

This recording of the musicians of the National Dance Company is a testament to the revival of the Cambodian National Dance Company. It features a variety of songs with *mohori* (string ensemble) accompaniment. The liner notes feature helpful transcriptions and translations of song lyrics.

*Mohori: Khmer Music from Cambodia* (Latitudes LAT50609, 1997)

The Sam Ang-Sam Ensemble includes Cambodian musicians and dancers now living in the United States. *Mohori* is the string instrument ensemble.

*The Music of Cambodia: 9 Gong Gamelan Music* (Celestial Harmonies 13074-2, 1993)

*The Music of Cambodia: Royal Court Music* (Celestial Harmonies 13075-2, 1994)

*The Music of Cambodia: Solo Instrumental Music* (Celestial Harmonies 13076-2, 1994)

Celestial Harmonies has released several recordings of Southeast Asian music, collected and produced by David and Kay Parsons. The first CD of this three-disc set devoted to Cambodian music includes six tracks of the *pinn peat* ensemble described in Chapter One as well as other gong chime music (the misnamed “nine-gong gamelan” is a *korng skor* ensemble, played for Cambodian funerals). The disc is rounded out with non-gong music as well. The second CD includes recordings of the *pinn peat* ensemble as well as the string ensemble called *mohori*. The third CD includes a variety of solo instruments recorded in Phnom Penh.

*Les Musiques du Ramayana: Volume 2: Cambodge* (Ocora C 560015, 1990)

This CD, from a set of three CDs that presents versions of the Ramayana from India (Volume 1), Cambodia (Volume 2), and Indonesia (Bali and West Java—Volume 3), features an hour’s worth of music from a Reamker dance performance, accompanied by *pinn peat* ensemble and performed by the Cambodian Royal Dance Company. This 1964 Paris recording predates the worst of the political turmoil that led to fall of the Cambodian monarchy and the decimation of Cambodian court musicians and dancers.

### **Recordings of Thai Music**

*The Nang Hong Suite: Siamese Funeral Music* (Nimbus NI 5332, 1991)

*Royal Court Music of Thailand* (Smithsonian-Folkways SF 40413, 1994)

This excellent recording features musicians from the Thai government Fine Arts Department performing *piphat*, *krueng sai*, and *mahori* music.

*Siamese Classical Music* series (Marco Polo)

Vol. 1: *The Piphat Ensemble before 1400 A.D.* (8.223197, 1994)

Vol. 2: *The Piphat Ensemble 1351–1767 A.D.* (8.223198, 1994)

Vol. 3: *The String Ensemble* (8.223199, 1994)

Vol. 4: *The Piphat Sepha* (8.223200, 1994)

Vol. 5: *The Mahori Orchestra* (8.223493, 1994)

*The Sleeping Angel: Thai Classical Music* (Nimbus NI 5319, 1991)

All the above CDs feature the well-known Fong Naam ensemble performing various repertoires of Thai classical music on *piphat* (gong-chime), *khruang sai* (string), and *mahori* (mixed) ensembles.

### ***Recordings of Cirebonese Music***

*The Gamelan of Cirebon* (King Records World Music Library KICC-5130, 1991)

Features several well-recorded cuts of modern Cirebonese gamelan, including a *topeng* dance accompaniment for the “Panji” dance as performed by Sujana Arja.

### ***Recordings of Central Javanese Music***

*Java: Historic Gamelans* (Unesco collection, Musical sources, Art music from South-East Asia; IX-2, Philips 6586 004, released on LP in the 1970s).

Although it has yet to be rereleased on CD, this recording is worth seeking out to hear a variety of Central Javanese heirloom palace gamelan ensembles, including the very old ceremonial ensembles *sekatèn*, *kodok ngorek*, and *carabalen*, as well as more modern-style ensembles.

*Nonesuch Explorer series* (Elektra-Nonesuch)

*Java: The Jasmine Isle: Gamelan* (79717, released 1969; rereleased on CD 2003)

*Java: Court Gamelan* (79719, released 1971; rereleased on CD 2003)

*Java: Court Gamelan II* (79721, released 1977; rereleased on CD 2003)

*Java: Court Gamelan III* (79722, released 1979; rereleased on CD 2003)

*Court Gamelan*, *Court Gamelan II*, and *Court Gamelan III*, all recorded by Bob Brown, feature well-recorded selections from three of the four Central Javanese kraton (Paku Alaman, Mangkunegaran, and Kraton Yogyakarta, respectively). *The Jasmine Isle* (recorded by David Lewiston), on the other hand, includes tracks that are not particularly representative of either Central Javanese or Sundanese gamelan music.

*The Sultan's Pleasure: Javanese Gamelan and Vocal Music* (Music of the World CDT-116, 1994).

Ethnomusicologist Roger Vetter put together this excellent sampling of music that is broadcast over the radio from the Yogyakarta *kraton* every 35 days to celebrate the Sultan's “birthday.” It includes a diverse range of musical styles and sounds that represent a specifically Yogyakarta palace approach to gamelan music.

*World Music Library* Javanese gamelan recordings (King Records)

*The Javanese Gamelan* (King Records World Music Library KICC-5129, 1987)

*Klenengan Session of Solonese Gamelan I* (King Records World Music Library KICC-5185, 1994)

*Langendriyan—Music of Mangkunegaran Solo II* (King Records World Music Library KICC-5194, 1995)

*Music of Mangkunegaran Solo I* (King Records World Music Library KICC-5184, 1994)

Although not as extensive as their Balinese releases, these World Music Library CDs of Javanese music are similarly well-recorded (especially the later ones). Unfortunately, the bulk of the liner notes is in Japanese, and the English translations are not always particularly good.

### ***Recordings of Eastern Javanese Music***

*Music of Indonesia Series, Vol. 1: East Java 1—Songs Before Dawn: Gandrung Banyuwangi* (Smithsonian Folkways SFW 40055, 1991)

The first volume of Smithsonian Folkways' excellent Music of Indonesia series provides excerpts of eastern Javanese *gandrung* music; Philip Yampolsky's detailed liner notes provide meticulously researched background information and an excellent bibliography.

*Music of Madura: Java, Indonesia* (ODE Records ODE 1381; 1991).

Madura is technically part of the province of East Java, but is home to a variety of musical traditions unique to the island. This disc features an extensive sampling of vocal and instrumental genres (including several gamelan ensembles); each track is well recorded, but unfortunately the liner notes are not very extensive—a serious liability because information about Madurese music is not readily available.

### ***Recordings of Balinese Music***

Because of its status as an international tourist destination, there are quite a few commercially-available recordings of Balinese music readily available. Listeners should beware of recordings that appear to have been put together by producers with little knowledge of Balinese music or culture; usually a cursory examination of the liner notes will help determine whether a recording is credible or not. Below are a few recordings that are reliable.

*Bali: Roots of Gamelan* (World Arbiter 1999)

This fascinating release makes readily available a scattering of old 78 rpm recordings of Balinese music released in the 1920s; the rest of the disc features performances of Colin McPhee's transcriptions (for piano, mostly) of Balinese music.

*Music of the Gamelan Gong Kebyar, Vol. 1* (Vital Records VR 401, 1996)*Music of the Gamelan Gong Kebyar, Vol. 2* (Vital Records VR 402, 1996)

Wayne Vitale, an American composer and the director of California's eminent Sekar Jaya ensemble, compiled these CDs devoted to *gong kebyar* repertory. Volume 1 features the musicians of the Indonesian government-sponsored music academy (STSI Denpasar), directed by I Wayan Beratha. Volume 2 features compositions by I Nyoman Windha.

*Nonesuch Explorer series* (Elektra-Nonesuch)

*Bali: Music from the Morning of the World* (79714, 1967, rereleased 2002)

*Bali: Golden Rain* (79716, 1967, rereleased 2002)

*Bali: Gamelan and Kecak* (79814, 1987, rereleased 2003)

*Bali: Music for the Shadow Play* (79718, 1970, rereleased 2003)

*Bali: Gamelan Semar Pegulingan: Gamelan of the Love God* (79720, 1972, rereleased 2003)

All five of the groundbreaking Nonesuch recordings of Balinese music have been rereleased on CD. The earlier Nonesuch Explorer series recordings of Balinese music are tantalizing samplers of the many ensembles, styles, and genres that Balinese music encompasses, recorded by David Lewiston. *Music from the Morning of the World* (recorded in 1966), includes *gong kebyar*, *kecak*, *angklung*, and a vocal solo. *Gamelan and Kecak* includes well-recorded examples of a variety of *beleganjur*, *angklung*, *gong kebyar*, as well as some non-gamelan genres, including a *kecak* excerpt. *Golden Rain* has a much longer *kecak* excerpt as well as some gamelan tracks. Bob Brown's contributions to the series are a bit more focused: *Music for the Shadow Play* includes only music for *gender wayang* (the quartet of metallophones that accompanies Balinese shadow puppet theater), and *Bali: Gamelan Semar Pegulingan: Gamelan of the Love God* is devoted to the seven-tone gamelan revived with the help of Colin McPhee.

*World Music Library* recordings of Balinese music (King Records)

*Music in Bali* (KICC-5127, 1991)

*The Gamelan Music of Bali* (KICC-5126, 1991)

*Kecak and Sanghyang of Bali* (KICC-5128, 1991)

*Gamelan Gong Gede of Batur Temple* (KICC-5153, 1992)

*Gamelan Gong Kebyar of "Eka Cita," Abian Kapas Kaja* (KICC-5154, 1992)

*Gender Wayang of Sukawati Village* (KICC-5156, 1992)

*Jegog of Negara* (KICC-5157, 1992)

*Gamelan Semar Pegulingan of Binoh Village* (KICC-5155, 1992)

*Gamelan Jaged Bumbung "Suar Agung," Negara* (KICC-5158, 1994)

*Gamelan Semar Pegulingan "Gunung Jati," Br. Teges Kanginan* (KICC-5180, 1994)

*Gamelan Selonding "Guna Winangun," Teganan* (KICC-5182, 1994)

*Geguntangan Arja "Arja Bon Bali"* (KICC-5183, 1994)

*Golden Rain: Gong Kebyar of Gunung Sari, Bali* (KICC-5195, 1995)

*Saron of Singapadu* (KICC-5196, 1995)

*Baleganjur of Pande and Angklung of Sidan, Bali* (KICC-5197, 1995)

Most of these releases focus on a particular Balinese genre and ensemble; although the recording quality of the earlier releases is spotty, the later ones are generally quite good. Unfortunately, the bulk of the liner notes is in Japanese, and the English translations are not always particularly good.

### ***Recordings of Sundanese Music***

*Classical Tembang Sunda: Music from West Java* (Celestial Harmonies 13134-2, 1996)

There is some fine *tembang Sunda* performed by Ida Widawati on this CD, including many of the most well-known songs in both *pelog* and *sorog* tuning systems. The liner notes are quite good (except for the peculiar opening essay by Barbara Crossette).

*Gamelan Degung: Classical Music of Sunda, West Java* (Pan 2053, 1996)

Ernst Heins recorded the musicians of Jugala performing a number of classical *degung* pieces. One track features Euis Komariah singing two beautiful songs ("Kembang Bungur" and "Reumbeuy Bandung") in *degung kawih* style; two other tracks include vocal solos by Ida Widawati.

*Indonesia: Music from West Java* (Unesco D 8041, 1970, rereleased on CD in 1994).

*Java: Sundanese Folk Music* (Unesco D 8051, 1972, rereleased on CD in 1994).

These two samplers of Sundanese music include quite a variety of genres and styles. The first features two lovely, old-fashioned tracks of gamelan salendro music, along with *kacapi-suling* and *degung* pieces, rounded out with a sample of *wayang golek* (accompanied by gamelan salendro). The notes, unfortunately, are riddled with errors. The second is a rich resource for non-gamelan music from West Java, including non-diatonic *angklung*

ensemble music, a *ketuk tilu* cut, and music to accompany *penca silat*. The liner notes are informative and accurate.

*Indonesia: Wayang Golek: The Sound and Celebration of Sundanese Puppet Theater* (Multicultural Media. MCM3019/24 2001). Six compact discs, with 44-page booklet and enhanced CD with complete text transcription and translations. Recorded, edited, and annotated by Andrew N. Weintraub.

This six-CD set presents a complete performance of Sundanese *wayang golek purwa* (rod puppet theater) performed by West Java's best known and most popular *dalang*, Asep Sunandar Sunarya. The substantial liner notes include a pithy history of *wayang golek*, a rich description of the social context of *wayang*, an excellent general introduction to the art of *wayang* and the *gamelan* music that accompanies it, as well as specific details of this particular performance and a biography of Asep Sunandar Sunarya. In addition, a complete transcription and translation of the dialogue and song texts is provided in Adobe's Portable Document Format (PDF). The scene-by-scene (and track-by-track) performance flowchart in the liner notes makes it quite simple to match up the recordings with the text transcription and translation, enabling non-Sundanese speakers to follow and understand the performance.

*Lolongkrang: Gamelan Degung Music of West Java* (Sakti 33, 1994)

*Pusaka Sunda: Samagaha* (Sakti 34, 1999)

The renowned *suling* player Burhan Sukarma leads an ensemble of American *gamelan* musicians in renditions of classical *degung* compositions and modern compositions.

*The Sound of Sunda* (Globestyle CDORB 060, 1990)

*Jaipongan Java: Euis Komariah with Jugala Orchestra* (Globestyle CDORB 057, 1990)

These two excellent CDs feature the velvet voice of Euis Komariah accompanied by the peerless musicians of *Jugala*. *Jaipongan Java* features *gamelan salendro* and a variety of *jaipongan* and *kliningan* selections. *The Sound of Sunda* features both *gamelan salendro* and *degung* accompaniments.

*Trance 3: Zen Shakuhachi, Mbira Spirit Ceremony, and Sacred Tembang Sunda* (Ellipsis Arts 4330, 1999)

Although *tembang Sunda* is not "trance" music by any stretch of the imagination, this trance sampler features some excellent recordings of one of West Java's most renowned *tembang* singers (Euis Komariah). The Japanese *shakuhachi* (bamboo flute) and Zimbabwean *mbira* ("thumb piano") tracks are quite nice, too.



*Udan Mas Tembang Sunda: Ida Widawati* (Pan 4004, 1996)

Recorded live in 1974 at concerts in Amsterdam, this recording captures one of *tembang Sunda*'s most celebrated performers at the very beginning of her illustrious career. Although there are some awkward moments on the recording, it is a good sampler of the *tembang* repertory, and includes songs in all three of the major *tembang Sunda* tuning systems.

*West Java: Sundanese Jaipong and other Popular Music* (Nonesuch Explorer Series 79815, 2003)

This collection of songs was originally released under the title "Tonggeret"; it contains several excellent *jaipongan* tracks sung by Idjah Hadidjah, who was one of the most famous and popular singers recording for the Jugala studio under the direction of Gugum Gumbira during the 1980s. "Daun Pulus/Keser Bojong" remains a *jaipongan* standard. Some of the tunes, for which the drumming is not quite so exuberant, are perhaps better classified as *kliningan*.

### ***Recordings of Dangdut and Other Popular Indonesian Music***

*Dari Sunda: Women of the World, Vol 6: Detty Kurnia*. (Riverboat TUGCD1011, 1997)

*Detty Kurnia: Coyor Panon* (Timbuktu FLTRCD519, 1993)

Detty Kurnia's substantial background as a performer of Sundanese traditional music is apparent in her global-pop-tinged versions of old and new Sundanese- and Indonesian-language songs. The accompanying tracks on both these CDs include synthesized *gamelan* sounds as well as excellent *rebab*, *gendang*, and *suling* playing, all of which enliven the more conventional guitar-keyboard-drum grooves.

*Music of Indonesia 2: Indonesian Popular Music—Kroncong, Dangdut & Langgam Jawa* (Smithsonian-Folkways SFW 40056, 1991)

Along with some *kroncong* and *langgam* selections, this CD includes four Rhoma Irama dangdut songs, along with transcriptions and translations of the lyrics

*The Rough Guide to the Music of Indonesia* (World Music Network 1055, 2000)

Includes two Rhoma Irama songs, one performed by Rhoma Irama, and one by Elvy Sukaesih); unfortunately the notes do not include any lyrics or translations.

## FURTHER VIEWING

*Videos on Southeast Asia in General*

JVC Video Anthology of World Music and Dance (Victor Company of Japan, 1990)

This monumental thirty-tape collection of video excerpts from around the world includes five volumes featuring Southeast Asian performances. The quality of the material is very uneven, as is the coverage; because many of the excerpts were recorded when national arts troupes toured Japan, there is a “pot-luck” quality to the selection of traditions, genres, pieces, and performers included in the collection. The copious notes that accompany the tapes are similarly uneven; although they are mostly accurate, they do not always tell the viewer much that is interesting or relevant about the taped examples. Nevertheless, by virtue of its comprehensiveness and its wide availability, the JVC video series is a useful resource. It is worthwhile to consult some of the comprehensive reviews of the series before investing too much time in the individual selections. One exhaustive review essay, published in the journal *Asian Music* (Vol. 24, No. 2, 1993:111–188), features detailed commentary from experts in each of the performing traditions that the series covers; Deborah Wong’s essay in the journal *Ethnomusicology* (Vol. 39, No. 3, 1995:529–538) is much easier to digest but still alerts its readers to most of the series’ significant problems (Miller, Dilling et al. 1993; Wong 1995).

## SOUTHEAST ASIA I—Tape 6: Vietnam and Cambodia

The Vietnamese selections are not well contextualized, either on the video or in the accompanying booklets, but they do provide a window into some Vietnamese performing traditions. According to Sam-Ang Sam, the four Cambodian excerpts are “partial and not representative. I would not even recommend showing them to a class” (Miller, Dilling et al. 1993:141).

## SOUTHEAST ASIA II—Tape 7: Thailand and Myanmar (Burma)

The Thai examples were performed by musicians and dancers from the Thailand Department of Fine Arts on tour in Japan and feature samples of *piphat*, *mahori*, and *khruang sai* ensembles. The Burmese selections, too, feature a national troupe on tour in Japan.

## SOUTHEAST ASIA III—Tape 8: Malaysia and the Philippines

Most of the Philippines examples are staged examples of indigenous music from the uplands of the northern Philippines. The two examples featuring *kulintang* ensemble accompaniment are not particularly satisfying. The Malaysian examples feature the courtly Malaysian version of a *gamelan* ensemble (based on Javanese

models), supplemented by one string instrument duet performed in a studio by Kenyah musicians from Sarawak.

**SOUTHEAST ASIA IV—Tape 9: Indonesia 1: Bali**

The six selections were all filmed outdoors in the courtyard of a Balinese temple, giving some semblance of an appropriate context, but without an audience. Nevertheless, the performances are adequate for demonstration purposes, and some of the dancing is quite good.

**SOUTHEAST ASIA V—Tape 10: Indonesia 2: Bali and Java**

This volume includes several selections by a Sundanese troupe on tour in Japan, including *degung*, *tembang Sunda*, *pantun*, and *celempungan* (an ensemble featuring zithers, gongs, drums, rebab, and singers which plays *gamelan salendro kliningan* repertory). These performances are quite good, although their “in the studio” ambience makes them seem a bit stiff. The *pantun* performance in particular seems inappropriately staged, performed by a *tembang* singer who accompanies himself on a *tembang*-style *kacapi*. The *celempungan* selection includes some excellent closeup footage of rebab fingering for the *sorog* tuning. The sole Central Javanese clip (an excerpt from a *wayang kulit* performance), however, leaves much to be desired. Also on the tape is a long excerpt from a rather unconventional, but fascinating, Balinese *kecak* performance.

### ***Videos on Indonesia in General***

*Traditional Dances of Indonesia* (Berkeley: University of California Extension Center for Media and Independent Learning, 1990)

*Dances of West Sumatra: Tari Piring; Tari Alang Tari Jawa* (37961)

*Dances of Surakarta, Central Java: Bedoyo Elo Elo* (37950)

*Dances of Surakarta, Central Java: Bedoyo Pangkur* (37951)

*Dances of Yogyakarta, Central Java: Bekasan Menak* (37955)

*Dances of Yogyakarta, Central Java: Langen Mandra Wanara* (37957)

*Dances of Yogyakarta, Central Java: Lawung Ageng* (37956)

*Dances of Bali: Baris Katekok Jago; Kebyar Duduk* (37959)

*Dances of Bali: Barong* (37960)

*Dances of Bali: Legong Kraton* (37958)

*Dances of Surakarta, Central Java: Menak Konchar* (37954)

*Dances of Surakarta, Central Java: Srimpi Anglir Medung* (37953)

*Dances of Surakarta, Central Java: Srimpi Gondokusomo* (37952)

This series of twelve videos was filmed in the 1970s; each provides video

documentation of a particular Central Javanese, Balinese, or Sumatran dance.

### ***Videos on Khmer/Cambodian Music and Dance***

*Dancing through Death: The Monkey, Magic and Madness* (Filmmakers [sic] Library, 1999)

This video focuses on one Cambodian refugee who finds purpose and meaning in Cambodian dance to explore the effect of the murderous Khmer Rouge on Cambodian performing arts. It includes interviews with performers in Cambodia and the United States, and documents the process of reconstructing and reviving classical dance traditions in Cambodia and abroad.

*Khmer Court Dance: Cambodian Royal Court Dances* (Multicultural Media, 1995)

The video presents five Cambodian court dances, replete with dramatic costumes, performed to the accompaniment of mostly prerecorded music. The video features performances by Sam-Ang Sam, Chan Moly Sam, and other fine Cambodian artists living in the United States (some of whom performed both as dancers on the video and musicians in the prerecorded sound track). Each dance is introduced on the video by Paul Cravath, who provides useful background information.

*The Tenth Dancer* (Women Make Movies, 1993)

Em Theay was among the few Royal Court Ballet dancers to survive the Khmer Rouge assault on Cambodian arts; this documentary tells the story of her attempts to rebuild the troupe with the help of a former student.

### ***Video on Thai Music***

*Two Faces of Thailand: A Musical Portrait* (Shanachie, 1994)

Originally released in 1983, this documentary followed a troupe performing *Luk Tung* (a genre which mixed Thai and global pop styles) as it toured rural Thailand.

### ***Videos on Cirebonese Music and Dance***

*Penca and Topeng Babakan from Sunda, Indonesia* (Performing Arts Program of the Asia Society, 1977)

The Asia Society sponsored a tour of the U.S. by *dalang topeng* Sujana Arja

with Cirebonese and Sundanese musicians from Slangit and Bandung. The video features explanations of the music and dance by Beate Gordon and performances of *penca silat* as well as Cirebonese *topeng*.

*Topeng Babakan: Solo Masked Dance of West Java* (KT Films, 1984)

This ten-minute video describes the artistic and social world of *dalang* topeng Sujana Arja from the village of Slangit near Cirebon.

### ***Videos on Central Javanese Music and Dance***

*Copper, Tin and Fire: Gongsmiting in Java* (Sam Quigley, 1989)

Ethnomusicologist Sam Quigley produced this documentary that follows the process of forging a small gong in the smithy of Tentrem Sarwanto in Surakarta.

*Gambyong Pangkur: Traditional Javanese Court Dance from Solo* (Resonance Media, 1993)

*The Prosperity of Wibisana: A Performance of Wayang Kulit* (Resonance Media, 1995)

*The Prosperity of Wibisana: A Study Guide and Analysis of Javanese Wayang Kulit* (Resonance Media, 1995)

These three well-produced videos feature Lewis and Clark College *gamelan* ensemble (Portland, Oregon), directed by Widiyanto S. Putro, and guest artists. *Gambyong Pangkur* is a Central Javanese court-style dance, here performed by Sri Endah Wahyuningsih. *The Prosperity of Wibisana* is a one-and-a-half hour *wayang kulit* performance (with Widiyanto as the *dalang*), presented mostly in English, accompanied by the college gamelan ensemble (with a few expert musicians sitting in). The *Study Guide and Analysis* video has Widiyanto explicating many aspects of *The Prosperity of Wibisana*'s plot, the puppets, and music.

*Gamelan Music of Java* (East West Center, University of Hawai'i, 1983)

The University of Hawai'i gamelan ensemble systematically introduces the instruments and idioms of Central Javanese gamelan music. The video also features interviews with the eloquent Hardja Susilo, and a dance performance by the late Ben Suharto.

*Wayang Kulit: Shadow Theater of Java* (Baylis Glascocock Films, 1997)

A performance by the *dalang* Oemartopo provides the opportunity for some excellent and extensive footage of Central Javanese *wayang kulit* and gamelan. The video also places the *wayang* performance within a Javanese cultural context.

### ***Videos on Balinese Music and Dance***

*Bali: The Mask of Rangda* (Hartley Film Foundation, 1975)

This film develops a convincing Freudian interpretation of Balinese masked and trance dances and includes some good footage of the *barong* dance.

*Dance and Trance of Balinese Children* (Filmmakers Library, 1995)

This video updates Mead's, Bateson's, and Belo's earlier documentaries on Balinese dance; it features interviews with Balinese dance teachers and explores the role of trance dancing in modern Bali as well as internationally.

*The Great Ceremony to Straighten the World* (University of California Extension Media Center, 1994)

This video contextualizes Balinese ritual, music, and dance in the lives of Balinese.

*Island of Temples* (Jeffrey Norton Publishers, 1992)

Originally produced in 1973, this film features some good footage of a *kecak* performance as well as the *barong* dance.

*Kawitan: Creating Childhood in Bali* (Berkeley: University of California Extension Center for Media and Independent Learning 38281, 2002)

Documents rituals marking a child's growth.

*Kembali: To Return* (Berkeley: University of California Extension Center for Media and Independent Learning 38220, 1991)

A documentary of the American group Sekar Jaya as they perform in Bali as the first Western ensemble to perform Balinese music there.

*Learning to Dance in Bali* (Pennsylvania State University, Audio-Visual Services, 1991)

*Trance and Dance in Bali* (Pennsylvania State University, Audio-Visual Services, 1991)

Filmed by Jane Belo, Gregory Bateson, and Margaret Mead in the late 1930s, these black-and-white films provide an historic look at Balinese dance. *Trance and Dance*, filmed in Pagoetan, presents a trance ritual involving masked dancers portraying Rangda (a witch) and the Barong (a mythical beast).

*Learning to Dance* demonstrates how Balinese children learn dance by being moved by their teacher as well as by watching and imitating.

### ***Video on Sundanese Music, Dance, and Theater***

*Wayang Golek: Performing Arts of Sunda (West Java)* (BBC, Open University, Insight Media, 1999)

Produced with the help of Simon Cook, this excellent video provides glimpses into the lives of dalang Atik Rasta and his father Otong Rasta as it examines Sundanese wayang golek and gamelan salendro music. The second part of the video provides an instrument-by-instrument breakdown of the gamelan salendro piece “Bendrong” that clarifies the musical structure of gamelan salendro style.

#### FURTHER WEB-SURFING

The internet’s World Wide Web is an ever-shifting source of information about just about anything, including Indonesian music. The sites listed below are only a few of the hundreds that address Indonesian musical topics; criteria for their inclusion in this volume include (1) they are relatively stable and unlikely to disappear soon, (2) they provide information or services that are difficult to find elsewhere, and (3) they are reliable and accurate. Most of the sites listed below include updated lists of other useful links to relevant websites.

Not included in the list are the home pages of the myriad American and European *gamelan* clubs that maintain an internet presence; these sites are often the source of much useful general information about gamelan music.

<http://listserv.dartmouth.edu/Archives/gamelan.html>

This archive contains all the messages ever posted to the “Gamelan List,” an online mailing list for those interested in Indonesian performing arts, since its inception in 1994.

<http://mysite.freemove.com/gamelan/>

Simon Cook’s site focuses on his own Sundanese music groups based in London, England, but it also includes general information about Sundanese music.

<http://webware.cite-musique.fr/www/gamelan/>

This site features an interactive gamelan; web-surfers can try their hands at “playing” gamelan instruments.

<http://www.calarts.edu/~drummond/gendhing.html>

Barry Drummond, an expert on Central Javanese style, maintains this page that features an enormous collection of notation for Central Javanese gamelan pieces in PDF format as well as a useful “Introduction to Gamelan” written by Sumarsam and detailed glossary of Javanese musical terms.

<http://www.arts.cornell.edu/gamelan/aski.htm>

This site, hosted by Cornell University, contains quite a few Real Audio files of recordings of gamelan music made at ASKI (now STSI) Surakarta in 1971. These are substantial performances of interesting repertory.

<http://www.gamelan.org/>

The American Gamelan Institute is a source for purchasing difficult-to-find recordings, musical scores, and publications about Indonesian music. It also includes many valuable links to other relevant websites. One resource maintained by the Institute is a list of gamelan ensembles active in the United States.

<http://web.grinnell.edu/courses/mus/gamelans/>

Grinnell College hosts this amazing site introducing the heirloom gamelan ensembles of the Kraton Yogyakarta, with excellent and detailed text by Roger Vetter, as well as many beautiful photographs and sound clips.

<http://www.indonesianmusic.com/>

The Indonesian Music Shop is an online store featuring a large selection of Indonesian traditional and popular music recordings and VCDs ("Video CDs," a format for video in Southeast Asia that is compatible with some American DVD players and computers).

<http://www.joglosemar.co.id/index.html>

Joglosemar Online, a non-profit foundation that promotes interest in and tourism to Central and eastern Java, sponsors this compendium of information about Central and eastern Javanese culture from the cities of Yogyakarta, Surakarta, and Semarang, including music, theater, and ceremonies.

<http://www.monkeyc.org/play.html>

Monkey C bills themselves as an "alternative gamelan" from Santa Barbara, California; this part of their website features interactive gamelan instruments that sound quite good and are easy to play.

[http://www.seasite.niu.edu/Indonesian/Budaya\\_Bangsa/Gamelan/Main\\_Page/main\\_page.htm](http://www.seasite.niu.edu/Indonesian/Budaya_Bangsa/Gamelan/Main_Page/main_page.htm)

This site, hosted by the Center for Southeast Asian Studies at Northern Illinois University, provides basic introductions to Central Javanese and Balinese gamelan styles; includes many RealPlayer sound files to demonstrate tunings, instrument timbres, and styles.

<http://www.xs4all.nl/~gjvo/gamelan/delft/>

Geert Jan van Oldenborgh has made samples of many of the keys and gongs from the nineteenth-century gamelan on display in the Museum Nusantara Delft in the Netherlands; this web page lets visitors hear the samples; in some cases, users can click on pictures of the gamelan instrument keys/pots to hear the sampled sounds.





# Listening Guide

The compact disc that accompanies this book features recordings drawn from commercial and field recordings that are intended to illustrate and amplify the book's descriptions of musical styles and processes. The listening notes below provide background information about the performers and analytical information about the selections.

There also is a timeline for each track on the CD that precisely locates notable musical features (in a *minutes:seconds* format) within the recording for listeners who monitor the CD player's timing display. In most cases, the timeline is set up in a sort of outline format; indented subentries do not indicate another successive event, but rather further amplify the notable feature(s) to which they are subordinate.

## TRACK 1

*Music culture:* Toba Batak

*Genre:* *gondang sabangunan*

*Piece title:* "Gondang Si Monang-Monang"

*Performers:* Musicians from Parondang, North Sumatra: Ama ni Hallasson

Tamba (*taganing*); Ama ni Jontiar Manik (*sarune bolon*); Ama ni Rudi Simarmata (*gordang*); Ama ni Saria Situmorang, Hallasson Tamba, Ama ni Ronald Simarmata, and Ompu Ramlan Sihalohe (*ogung*); Ama ni Resta Turnip (*hesek*).

*Source:* Track 10 from *Music of Indonesia Vol. 4: Music of Nias & North Sumatra* (Smithsonian-Folkways SF 40420).

Philip Yampolsky recorded this *gondang sabangunan* ensemble outdoors in Parondang, North Sumatra, in 1991. "Monang" translates as "to be victorious," suggesting that this piece is associated with warfare; in current practice it might be played for either a secular or ritual function.

The colotomic foundation of the piece is provided by *ogung* (set of four gongs) and *hesek*, on which musicians perform the cycle of ostinato patterns notated in Figure 1.6. According to Philip Yampolsky's liner notes, this performance of "Gondang Si Monang-Monang" includes six statements of a melody; each statement occupies 24 gong ostinato cycles (except for the first state-

ment, in which one of the melodic motifs is repeated a couple of extra times and occupies a total of 26 cycles). The melody includes five slightly different melodic motifs, each of which takes two gong cycles to play and each of which is repeated two or four times.

The simultaneous variations of the melody, played on the *sarune* (double-reed wind instrument) and *taganing* (set of tuned drums), are very clear in this performance. The *taganing*'s pitches are not the same as those of the *sarune*, but the *taganing* melody's overall contour—how it rises and falls—tracks the *sarune* melody quite closely. When the *sarune* player sustains a note for a while, the *taganing* player creates a similar effect by rapidly beating on a single drum.

### *Timeline for “Gondang Si Monang-Monang”*

0:00–0:13 Introductory phrase

0:00 Drums set the pulse for the musicians

0:02 *ogung* and *hesek* join in, performing a fairly fast version of the cyclic ostinato pattern (see in Figure 1.6); each repetition of the cycle takes about 1-1/2 seconds.

0:04 *sarune* (double-reed wind instrument) and *taganing* (set of tuned drums) join in

0:13–0:42 first statement of melody

0:42–1:27 second statement of melody

1:27–2:01 third statement of melody

2:01–2:34 fourth statement of melody

2:34–3:08 fifth statement of melody

3:08–3:43 sixth statement of melody

3:43–end Ending phrase

## TRACK 2

*Music culture:* Cirebon

*Genre:* Village-style gamelan for *topeng* accompaniment

*Piece title:* “Gonjing/Sarung Ilang/Gonjing” (for “Rahwana” dance)

*Performers:* Members of the Panji Asmara troupe (led by *dalang topeng* Sujana Arja)

*Source:* Field recording made by Michael Ewing on 9 April 1993 at a *mapag* Sri village festival in the village of Cangkring near Cirebon.

This lively music accompanies the final character dance (“Rahwana” or “Klana”) of a Cirebonese village-style *topeng* (masked) dance performance.

This particular performance was commissioned by the village of Cangkring for *mapag Sri* (a village ceremony that welcomes the rice goddess as the rice crop matures). The *dalang topeng* is Sujana Arja, who comes from a prominent family of *dalang topeng* from the village of Slangit (Sujana Arja's father was a *dalang topeng*, as are several of his siblings; he in turn has taught one son and other members of his extended family the art of *topeng*). Sujana Arja's troupe is called Panji Asmara and includes musicians whose ancestors played music for Sujana Arja's forebears. The gamelan that accompanies him is tuned to a *slen-dro*-like tuning system that Cirebonese musicians call *prawa* (*topeng* also is accompanied with gamelan in the *pelog* tuning system).

"Rahwana" is the last dance in the sequence of five character dances that Sujana Arja typically performs for a complete *topeng* performance. It often is the shortest dance as well. This performance is quite short at 13 minutes; although it includes all four of the main sections of a *topeng* dance (from slowest to fastest: *dodoan*, *tengahan*, *kering*, and *deder*), the first two sections are quite short.

The primary piece for accompanying Rahwana, called "Gonjing," is a very short and simple melody. The colotomic form of the version of "Gonjing" that is played by the Panji Asmara musicians from the village of Slangit is notated in Figure 2.13 in Chapter Two; the melody is notated below using Sundanese cipher notation:

1 ② 3 4 3 4 1 ②

Each of the four sections of the Rahwana accompaniment is based on this same basic melody; the melody is transformed in each section, however, to portray a significantly different mood and provide a different colotomic form. The *dodoan* section of the dance, for example, is accompanied by a very stretched out version of the piece "Gonjing." The musicians insert an additional *pancer* and reiterate each short phrase to create a much longer and more convoluted tune; each note in the tune is allowed four beats for elaboration to further expand the piece. The character of this new melody is further altered by moving the gong stroke to the midpoint of the piece (on pitch 4):

1 2 1 5 1 5 1 2 1 2 1 5 1 5 1 ④ 1 4 1 3 1 3 1 4 1 1 1 5 1 5 1 ②

In this performance, the *dodoan* version of "Gonjing" is played twice.

For the *tengahan* section, the piece is made exactly half as long by halving the number of beats devoted to each of the notes in the *dodoan* section's expanded melody. The musicians give this version of the tune a unique character by playing a tuneful elaboration in unison for much of the gong phrase. This *tengahan* version includes only one gong stroke per cycle. In this version,

this section is played only twice before moving on to the *kering* section via a special transition phrase.

The *kering* section's accompaniment, too, is derived from the original "Gonjing" melody. This time the musicians take four beats to elaborate each of the melody notes. They typically call this version of the piece another name—"Sarung Ilang"—however. This version includes ten iterations of "Sarung Ilang." The final section of the dance is accompanied by "Gonjing" played without too much elaboration; one of the *saron* players plays the tune over and over again, while the other instrumentalists provide changing variations. This is the longest section of the dance; the musicians repeat "Gonjing" 64 times, with seemingly infinite variations in tempo, dynamics, and elaborations.

The drums and *kecrek* play the most dramatic variations because they are following the dancer's movements, providing appropriate sonic accents for the dancer's gestures. The Rahwana dance involves dramatic and sudden changes in energy flow, which help portray the Rahwana character's excessiveness; the loud drumming contributes enormously to the success of the portrayal.

A careful listener will be able to hear subtle differences in the drum patterns as the drummer accentuates the dancer's different choreographic patterns.

The performance opens with a brief introduction to "Gonjing" before slowing down to the *dodoan* accompaniment; after the dance is over, the musicians seamlessly transition to an ending piece ("Jiro") to let the audience know that the performance has ended.

### *Timeline for "Gonjing"*

- 0:00–0:07 *buka* (introductory phrase played by one of the *saron* players)
- 0:07–0:26 "Gonjing" and transition to *dodoan*
- 0:26–2:25 "Gonjing" for *dodoan* section
  - 0:26–1:05 first gong phrase
  - 1:05–1:34 second gong phrase
  - 1:34–2:01 first gong phrase
  - 2:01–2:25 second gong phrase
- 2:25–3:32 "Gonjing" for *tengahan* section
  - 2:25–2:58 gong phrase
  - 2:41 tuneful elaboration of the main melody begins
  - 2:58–3:19 gong phrase
  - 3:10 dramatic tempo increase to signal transition to "Sarung Ilang"
  - 3:19–3:32 transition to "Sarung Ilang"
- 3:32–5:42 "Sarung Ilang" (10 iterations) for *kering* section
  - 3:32–3:49 "Sarung Ilang" cycle (two gong phrases)

- 3:32–3:36 short gong phrase
- 3:36–3:49 long gong phrase
- 5:33–5:42 “Sarung Ilang” cycle, transition to the dedar version of “Gonjing”
- 5:38 drum plays signal; other instrumentalists quickly follow suit
- 5:42–12:46 “Gonjing” for dedar section (64 iterations)
- 5:42–5:48 “Gonjing” (two gong phrases)
- 5:42–5:43 first gong phrase
- 5:43–5:48 second gong phrase
- 12:11–12:21 slow down to *rangkep* (in which instrumentalists play double patterns)
- 12:21–12:32 *rangkep* cycle
- 12:32–12:46 ending phrase with transition to Jiro
- 12:46–13:07 “Jiro” (ending piece)

### TRACK 3

*Music culture:* Central Java; Sundanese

*Piece title:* Pelog and Slendro (Salendro) Scales

The first excerpt is the seven pitches of a *pelog* scale, played from low to high (on one of the *pelog demung* from Kyahi Udan Mas, a Central Javanese gamelan owned by the University of California at Berkeley). The second excerpt of the track is the five pitches of a *slendro* scale, played from low to high (on one of the *saron* from the *gamelan salendro* set owned by the author).

0:00 *pelog*

- 0:00 Javanese 1/Sundanese 5
- 0:01 Javanese 2/Sundanese 4
- 0:03 Javanese 3/Sundanese 3
- 0:05 Javanese 4/Sundanese 3-
- 0:06 Javanese 5/Sundanese 2
- 0:08 Javanese 6/Sundanese 1
- 0:10 Javanese 7/Sundanese 5+

0:15 *Slendro (salendro)*

- 0:15 Javanese 1/Sundanese 5
- 0:17 Javanese 2/Sundanese 4
- 0:20 Javanese 3/Sundanese 3
- 0:22 Javanese 5/Sundanese 2
- 0:25 Javanese 6/Sundanese 1
- 0:27 Javanese 1/Sundanese 5

## TRACK 4

*Music culture:* Central Java

*Genre:* Court-style gamelan

*Piece title:* Ladrang “Pangkur” pelog barang

*Performers:* Saptobudoyo Group from Surakarta, Indonesia, under the direction of Saptono (the musicians’ formal titles and names are provided in parentheses when appropriate): Saptono (K. R. T. Saptodipuro, *kendhang*); Teguh (R. T. Widododipuro, *gender*); Supanggih (K. R. T. Prof. Dr. S. Kar., *rebab*); Muryono (*slenthem*); Dalimin (M. Ng. Purwopangrawit, *bonang barung*); Sagimin (M. Ng. Haropangrawit, *bonang panerus*); Karno (M. Ng. Karnopangrawit, *saron demung*); Marsono (Drs. Marsono M. S. (*saron barung*); Kamso (*saron panerus*); Wardi (M. Ng. Wardipangrawit, *kenong*); M. Ng. Santopangrawit (*gong*); Tarnopangrawit (R. T. Mloyodipuro, *suling*); Suwito (M. Ng. Suwitodiprojo, *gambang*); Sigit (Sigit S. Kar., *siter*); Mulyani (Nyi Lurah Cendanilaras, *pesindhen*)

*Source:* Recording session conducted by Alex Dea in Surakarta, Indonesia, November 16, 2003.

Ethnomusicologist/composer Alex Dea arranged to have the distinguished musician Saptono convene his group of gamelan musicians to record this rendition of *ladrang* “Pangkur” especially for this book. The ensemble includes a who’s who of musicians in Surakarta, many of whom are associated with the two *kraton* (palaces) in Surakarta, the radio station (RRI Surakarta), the government-sponsored arts academy (STSI Surakarta), or the troupes of famous *dhalang* (puppeteers).

They present a version of “Pangkur” in the *pelog* tuning system, in *pathet barang* (“Pankgur” also is often performed in *slendro pathet manyura* or *slendro pathet sanga*). In this performance, the musicians treat “Pangkur” in a variety of ways to illustrate some of the sonic variety that different musical treatments bring to a single piece. The excerpt begins with a *buka* (introductory phrase) played on the *rebab* (two-stringed fiddle); this phrase is specifically associated with “Pangkur.” The drummer and the *gender* player join in toward the end of the introductory phrase, reinforcing for the other musicians the exact moment of their first entrance and the first gong stroke.

The rendition technically begins in rhythmic treatment called *irama lancar* (also referred to as *irama I*), in which the *balungan* part moves fairly quickly; however, the drummer immediately cues the musicians to slow down to *irama dados* (*irama II*). The *balungan* parts move somewhat more slowly in *irama II* and become much quieter, creating sonic space for the soft-style instrumental parts to come through in the texture. By the time the first *kempul* stroke occurs, the musicians have settled into *irama II* and the *pesindhen* (female vocal

soloist) begins to sing. She is joined by the *gerong* (male chorus) in the second iteration of “Pangkur.” The *gerong* sing a unison melody, using a standard set of words that can be used for any *ladrang* in *irama II*. The *pesindhen* sings the same words, but with her own free-flowing melody and rhythm. Like many Javanese song texts, this verse is a sort of riddle in which the first two lines give clues to words and the second two lines play with the words suggested by the first two lines to create a moral. (See Chapter Two for an explanation and translation of the first verse). The second verse follows a similar pattern: The first two lines describe the wife of a king, and the second two lines warn that playing around with women has its dangers.

Parabe sang smarabangun  
sepat domba kali Oya  
aja dolan lan wong priya  
geremeh nora prasaja

Garwa Sang Sindura prabu  
wicara mawa karana  
aja dolan lan wanita  
tan nyata asring katarka

At the end of the third *irama II* phrase, the drummer speeds up slightly and then turns from the set of two drums (*kendhang kalih*) he has been playing up to this point and switches to a medium-sized drum called *ciblon*, which signals the musicians to switch to the lively *kebar* style of playing. In *kebar*, many of the soft-style instruments (such as *rebab* and *suling*) drop out completely, the *kendhang* player provides a much more intricate part, the *kempul* player plays a slightly more elaborate pattern than usual, and the *gerong* (male chorus) sings spirited *alok* (wordless vocalizations), while the *pesindhen* sings her own florid melody. The *balungan*, played on instruments in the *saron* and *demung* section, is quite loud and strident and moves at a fairly brisk clip, and the *bonang barung* and *bonang panerus* players perform fancy interlocking (*imbal*) figurations.

After a few repetitions of the *kebar* treatment, the drummer signals a transition back to *irama II*. The end of *kebar* doesn’t occur until after the gong stroke, however. Once back in *irama II*, the drummer continues to slow down, which lets the musicians know that they won’t linger in *irama II*, but will slow down again into *irama wilet* (or *irama III*), a rhythmic treatment in which approximately twice as much time elapses between each *balungan* note as in *irama II*, providing time for the elaborating instrumentalists to play longer patterns. It becomes quite difficult for neophyte listeners to follow the *balungan*, in part because the *balungan* actually changes, and in part because it is obscured by the increasingly florid and prominent melodic parts played on the



*rebab*, *suling*, and other elaborating instruments, as well as from the *gerong*'s and *pesindhen*'s vocal lines. The distinctive timbres of the colotomic instruments (*gong*, *kempul*, *kenong*, and *ketuk*), however, easily cut through the dense texture to provide a clearly audible framework for the music (the timings for the strokes of each colotomic instrument is provided in the timeline below).

The musicians play one complete cycle of “Pangkur” in *irama III*; at the appropriate moment during the second cycle of *irama III*, the drummer signals a transition to yet another rhythmic treatment: *irama rangkep*. In *irama rangkep*, the *balungan* part moves still more slowly (although not quite half its *irama III* speed). The extra time gives the elaborating instrumentalists time to play extremely rapid figurations; they fit twice as many notes into the time between *balungan* notes as they did in *irama III*. The result is a kind of controlled freneticism which contrasts the stately, ponderous movement of the *balungan* and the colotomic form with dizzyingly rapid elaborating figurations.

Just before the end of the cycle, the drummer signals that the musicians should transition back to *irama III* at the gong stroke. *Irama III* sounds almost simple after complexities of *irama rangkep*; at the end of a full cycle of *irama III*, the drummer signals the musicians to return to the *kebar* treatment after the upcoming gong stroke. The quick-moving *balungan* melody once again emerges from the texture, lending a sense of return and familiarity leading to some kind of closure.

After a few more cycles of *kebar*, the drummer speeds up and changes back to using the *kendhang kalih* (set of two drums) to direct a cycle of a quick *irama I*. At the appropriate moment, he gives the signal to end, to which the musicians respond by beginning a gradual slowing down, delaying their inexorable arrival at the final gong stroke. The gong player creates one last moment of tension by delaying his final stroke for a moment or two, leaving the listeners hanging, waiting for that final note. When he finally plays the ending gong stroke, the other musicians quickly follow with their last note, and the release of built-up tension and the sense of closure is quite satisfying.

This rendition of “Pangkur” systematically explores the various rhythmic expansion techniques. The musicians stretched the time of each “Pangkur” cycle from about 27 seconds in *kebar* to almost one minute in *irama II*, to two minutes in *irama III*, to over two and a half minutes in *irama kebar*.

### *Timeline for “Pangkur”*

0:00–0:16 *buka* (introductory phrase)

0:00 *rebab* begins “Pangkur”-specific *buka* melody

0:10 drum begins the cue that reminds the musicians to play the parts appropriate for *ladrang*

- 0:12 *gender* joins in before the gong stroke
- 0:16–2:46 “Pangkur” in *irama II* (four cycles)
  - 0:16–1:04 first gong phrase in *irama II*
  - 1:04–2:00 second gong phrase in *irama II*; *gerong* (and *pesindhen*) sing the *salisir* verse that begins “Parabe sang” (see Chapter Two)
  - 2:00–2:46 third gong phrase, which begins in *irama II* but ends in *kebar*
- 2:46–3:34 “Pangkur” in *kebar* (four cycles), in which *gerongs* sing *alok* (stylized vocalizations), *kendhang* player performs lively drum patterns on *ciblon* (medium-sized drum), *bonang barung* and *bonang panerus* perform interlocking figurations (*imbal*), and *kempul* player adds extra strokes
  - 2:46–3:15 first *kebar* phrase
  - 3:15–3:42 second *kebar* phrase
  - 3:42–4:09 third *kebar* phrase
  - 4:09–3:34 third *kebar* phrase
- 3:34–5:25 gong phrase that begins in *kebar*, transitions through *irama II* to end in *irama III*
- 5:25–11:58 three gong phrases in *irama III* and *irama rangkep*
  - 5:25–7:23 phrase in *irama III*
    - 5:25–5:52 first *kenong* phrase
      - 5:30 *ketuk* stroke
      - 5:37 *wela*
      - 5:44 *ketuk* stroke
      - 5:52 *kenong* stroke
    - 5:52–6:21 second *kenong* phrase
      - 5:59 *ketuk* stroke
      - 6:06 *kempul* stroke
      - 6:14 *ketuk* stroke
      - 6:21 *kenong* stroke
    - 6:21–6:52 third *kenong* phrase
      - 6:29 *ketuk* stroke
      - 6:37 *kempul* stroke
      - 6:44 *ketuk* stroke
      - 6:52 *kenong* stroke
    - 6:52–7:23 fourth *kenong* phrase
      - 6:59 *ketuk* stroke
      - 7:07 *kempul* stroke
      - 7:14 *ketuk* stroke
      - 7:23 *kenong*/gong strokes
  - 7:23–10:06 gong phrase that begins in *irama III* and transitions to *irama rangkep*
  - 7:45 drummer signals that musicians should slow down to *irama rangkep*

- 7:50 musicians playing elaborating instruments double the density of their patterns for *irama rangkep*
- 10:02 drummer confirms the end of *rangkep* just before the gong stroke with a signal
- 10:06–11:58 another gong phrase in *irama III*
- 11:47 drummer speeds up to indicate a change in rhythm after the gong stroke
- 11:52 drummer signals musicians that the rhythm change will be to *kebar*
- 11:58–13:34 four more phrases in *irama kebar*
- 11:58–12:23 first *kebar* phrase
- 12:23–12:48 second *kebar* phrase
- 12:48–13:13 third *kebar* phrase
- 13:13–13:34 fourth *kebar* phrase
- 13:25 drummer speeds up to signal a change to *irama I* after the gong stroke
- 13:30 drummer changes to *kendhang kalih* (set of two drums) to confirm change to *irama I*
- 13:34–14:05 phrase in *irama I*, slows down to end (*suwuk*)
- 13:42 drummer begins signal to end; musicians slow down
- 14:02 gong player delays the last gong stroke
- 14:03 other musicians play their final note slightly after the final gong stroke

## TRACK 5

*Music culture:* Bali

*Genre:* gamelan *beleganjur*

*Piece title:* Music for *memukur* procession

*Performers:* Sekehe Gong Werdhi Suara of Banjar Kedaton, Kesiman, Bali

*Source:* field recording made by Michael B. Bakan in 1995 in Denpasar, Bali

(track 18 from the CD accompanying *Music of Death and New Creation:*

*Experiences in the World of Balinese Gamelan Beleganjur* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999).

In this excerpt, a *gamelan beleganjur* is marching in a *memukur* procession. *Memukur* is the final rite of purification for deceased Balinese individuals. The climax of the week-long ritual involves a procession to the sea, where an effigy representative of the soul of the deceased is thrown into the water; a *gamelan angklung* leads the procession, and a *gamelan beleganjur* brings up the rear (Bakan 1999:75–77).

In the recording, we hear the *gamelan beleganjur* as it passes us by on the road. The excerpt begins with the ensemble approaching from the distance. Each of the different groups of musical instruments is clearly audible as they pass by in sequence.

***Timeline for music for memukur procession***

- 0:00 even in the distance, the colotomic instruments and the main melody are evident
- 0:30 the drums signal the *cengceng* players to be silent
- 0:43 the *reyong* players' elaborations are quite clear as they draw near and pass by
- 0:54 the *cengceng* (cymbal) players join in with their own interlocking pattern (see Figures 2.28 and 2.29)
- 1:32 the drums signal an intensification in the *cengceng* part, followed by another rest
- 1:58 the *cengceng* players join in again, this time with a start-stop elaboration pattern
- 2:49 the *gamelan beleganjur* fades out as it continues toward the sea
- 3:17 the *cengceng* players' next pattern change is barely audible

TRACK 6

*Music culture:* Bali

*Genre:* Gong kebyar

*Piece title:* Jaya Semara

*Composer:* I Wayan Beratha (b. 1924)

*Performers:* Gamelan Sekar Jaya (Wayne Vitale, director)

*Source:* *Balinese Music in America* (track 1) produced by Gamelan Sekar Jaya, 6485 Conlon Avenue, El Cerrito, CA 94530 (1995).

I Wayan Beratha is a prominent Balinese composer and one of the pioneers of the *gong kebyar* style. According to ethnomusicologist Michael Tenzer, Beratha composed “Jaya Semara” in 1964, and it is loosely based on an older piece called “Kapi Raja”; it remains a fixture of *gong kebyar* repertory into the present (Tenzer 2000:326). Here it is performed by Gamelan Sekar Jaya, a California-based group (founded by Michael Tenzer, Rachel Cooper, and I Wayan Suweca in the 1970s and currently directed by Wayne Vitale) that focuses on studying and promoting Balinese music in the United States.

Like many *gong kebyar* pieces, “Jaya Semara” follows a three-section formal outline. The first section (*kawitan*, also called *kebyar* or *gineman* in the context of *gong kebyar*) serves as an introduction; it is a patchwork quilt of short snippets of musical ideas and textures. The second section (*pengawak*) provides the main body of the composition—a relatively slow, cyclical musical structure repeated a number of times with variations. The third section (*pengecet*) is a faster concluding section.

The introductory (*kawitan*) section of “Jaya Semara” features some of the *gong kebyar*’s instrumental sections playing alone, and thus provides an excellent opportunity to hear what the ensemble’s instrumental resources sounds like in isolation. In the second section (*pengawak*) the *kempli*’s timekeeping beat, as well as a colotomic framework, are quite clear.

In the second section (*pengawak*), the *calung* play a simple melody (notated below using Western solfège syllables) that is easily heard within the texture of the rest of the ensemble; the relationship of the strokes on the *gong*, *kempur*, and *kemong* that outline the colotomic form of the piece to the *calung* melody is very straightforward:

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<i>calung (pokok melody)</i>	<b>mi</b>	<b>do</b>	<b>so</b>	<b>fa</b>	<b>mi</b>	<b>do</b>	<b>so</b>	<b>fa</b>
<i>kemong</i>				<b>m</b>				
<i>kempur</i>		<b>p</b>				<b>p</b>		
<i>gong</i>								<b>G</b>

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In this main section, the *kempli* beat and strokes of the *gong*, *kempur*, and *kemong* (outlining colotomic form) are quite clear. A *suling* (bamboo flute) is added to the texture. Each cycle of the *pengawak* section is about 3 seconds long. The cycles are grouped into larger sections (each six cycles long) that are shaped by dynamics and varying instrumentation and end with an *angsel* (a special variation that begins with an increase in the dynamic level and involves leaving some notes out of the melody).

In the concluding section (*pengecet*), the tempo seems to increase wildly; the *kempli* drops out, and there is no longer a regular colotomic form underlying the figurations. The ending gesture involves the *gangsa* players executing a dramatic back-and-forth glissando on their instruments, in which they swipe their mallets rapidly across the keys to create a loud, chaotic cluster of tones that slowly fades out.

Michael Tenzer covers “Jaya Semara” in great detail in his book *Gong Kebyar: The Art of Twentieth-Century Balinese Music* (2000), including excellent transcriptions (in Western staff notation; pp. 327–331) and analysis (scattered throughout Chapter Eight).

### *Timeline for “Jaya Semara”*

- 0:00–2:35 Introductory section (*kawitan/kebyar/gineman*)
- 0:00 “Jaya Semara” begins with dramatic opening from the entire ensemble
  - 0:07 *reyong* “solo” (four musicians playing interlocking *kotekan* parts)
  - 0:17 *kendang* “solo” (two drummers playing interlocking parts)
  - 0:24 entire ensemble
  - 0:33 *reyong*
  - 0:53 entire ensemble
  - 0:58 *gangsa* (*gangsa* section playing interlocking *kotekan* parts)
  - 1:13 *reyong*
  - 1:38 *kendang* (drums), *cengceng*, *kempur*, gong
  - 1:53 *ugal* (lead *gangsa*) player cues the entire ensemble
  - 1:58 *calung* and *jegogan* (low-pitched, slow moving *gangsa*-family instruments) followed by the rest of the ensemble
  - 2:11 extended *kendang* “solo” (two drummers playing interlocking parts) leading into the main section
- 2:35–4:41 Main section (*pengawak*)
- 2:35–2:56 the first six-cycle section ending with an *angsel*
    - 2:35–2:45 three repetitions of the cycle at a relatively quiet dynamic level
    - 2:45 A drum signal lasting one cycle cues the musicians that they will begin an *angsel*
    - 2:49 *angsel* begins and occupies two cycles; in the first cycle, the ensemble section plays louder
    - 2:53 the dramatic moment of the *angsel* when most of the instruments drop out for a moment, leaving the *kempli* and the colotomic instruments playing alone until the end of the cycle
  - 2:56–3:17 after the *angsel*, another six-cycle section begins; at its beginning, the *gangsa* section’s interlocking parts are emphasized
    - 3:06 drums cue another *angsel*
  - 3:17–3:37 after the *angsel*, another six-cycle section begins; at its beginning, the *reyong* section’s interlocking parts are emphasized
    - 3:27 drums cue another *angsel*
  - 3:37–3:58 after the *angsel*, another six-cycle section begins; at its beginning, the *gangsa* section’s interlocking parts are emphasized
    - 3:48 drums cue another *angsel*
  - 3:58–4:20 after the *angsel*, another six-cycle section begins; at its beginning, the *reyong* section’s interlocking parts are emphasized
    - 4:09 drums cue another *angsel*

4:20–4:41 after the *angsel*, the *reyong* and *gangsa* interlocking parts are equally prominent

4:30 drums cue another *angsel*, which ends with a transition to the concluding section (*pengecet*)

4:41–5:27 Concluding section (*pengecet*)

## TRACK 7

*Music culture:* Sundanese

*Genre:* *gamelan salendro* to accompany *wayang golek*

*Piece title:* “Sinyur”

*Performers:* LS Giri Harja III (Asep Sunandar Sunarya, *dalang* and director)

*Source:* *Wayang Golek: The Sound and Celebration of Sundanese Puppet Theater*,

CD 4, tracks 3–4, recorded and annotated by Andrew Weintraub, released by Multicultural Media (2001).

In this excerpt from a Sundanese *wayang golek* performance, *dalang* Asep Sunandar Sunarya first makes one of his puppets perform dance. He uses his *campala* (a wooden knocker held in his right hand and knocked against the wooden chest in which he keeps his puppets) to signal the gamelan to start. Even without seeing the puppet, a *wayang* fan would know what kind of character was dancing from the sound of the drum patterns that accompany the dance—in this case, the drumming clearly identifies Areada as a *satria* (knight) character; the gamelan’s rhythmic treatment (*sawilet*—one *wilet*) is appropriate for this type of character as well. The singers further enliven the dance accompaniment music by singing short *sisindiran* verses. After the dance is over, the *dalang* plants the puppet firmly into the banana log stage so that the character can undertake a meditation. The *dalang* uses this break in the action to take a cigarette break of his own. He signals the gamelan to slow down to *opat wilet* (four *wilet*) so that the singers (two *pasinden* and a *wiraswara*) can sing an extended musical interlude. In four *wilet*, the *pasinden* have plenty of musical space to show off their virtuosity; they also take the opportunity to insert into their sung texts the names of prominent members of the audience as well as the names of patrons who sent notes, monetary gifts, or requests to the singers (such names are usually prefixed with the honorific title “Bapa,” roughly equivalent to “Mr.”). When the *dalang* is ready to resume the dramatic action, he again signals the gamelan to speed up to *dua wilet* (two *wilet*) and end. The gamelan plays in the *salendro* tuning system while the singers’ melodies are in *sorog*.

After the musical interlude is over, and before beginning with the narration and subsequent action, the *dalang* sings a *kakawen* (mood song) to set the

scene. There is a whole repertory of stock *kakawen* from which the *dalang* can choose to create the appropriate mood; in this case, “Nurcahaya” (“A Ray of Brilliance”) suggests that Areada’s meditation is indeed powerful.

In the timeline for this piece, below the timing for each gong cycle are the words each singer performs during that cycle, along with a translation (the translations were first published in *Jabang tutuka/The birth of Gatotkaca: A Sundanese Wayang Golek Purwa Performance from West Java performed by Asep Sunandar Sunarya and Giri Harja III* (1998:54–55, 191–194), and are reprinted here with permission from Lontar Press and Andrew N. Weintraub.

### *Timeline for “Sinyur”*

0:00 *campala* cue from *dalang*, followed by *pangkat* (played on *saron*)

0:05–0:17 cycle 1 of “Sinyur” in one *wilet*

**Areada:** Ama. Mudah-mudahan we putra tatapa teh aya dina  
kakiatan, Ama . . .  
*I pray and hope that my meditation will be strong . . .*

0:17–0:26 cycle 2 of “Sinyur” in one *wilet*

0:26–0:40 cycle 3 of “Sinyur” in one *wilet*; the musicians add interlocking vocalizations called *senggak* to enhance the dance’s liveliness

**wiraswara:** Belut sitit saba darat  
*A scaly eel arrives on shore*  
Kapiraray siang wengi  
*appearing both day and night*

0:40–0:54 cycle 4 of “Sinyur” in one *wilet*; dynamic dance drumming for Areada’s dance begins

**pasinden 1:** Sapanjang urang gumelar  
*As long as we live*  
Ulah kendat nya ihtiar  
*do not give up hope*

0:54–1:02 cycle 5 of “Sinyur” in one *wilet*

Elmu tungtut dunya siar  
*strive for knowledge to achieve wealth*  
Nu perlu kudu disinglar  
*What must be avoided—*

1:02–1:11 cycle 6 of “Sinyur” in one *wilet*

Ka batur ulah takabur  
*to others do not be rude*  
Kalakuan nu teu jujur  
*That is not right*

1:11–1:18 cycle 7 of “Sinyur” in one *wilet*



Hirup anu kudu akur  
*Our lives must be controlled*  
 Titisan urang sakujur  
*our skills fortified*

1:18–1:26 cycle 8 of “Sinyur” in one *wilet*

**wiraswara:** Aya manuk dina haur  
*A bird on a bamboo*

Eunteup dina luhur pager  
*perched atop a fence*

1:26–1:34 cycle 9 of “Sinyur” in one *wilet*

Hirup anu jadi paur  
*a life full of worries*

Laku lampah nu teu bener  
*behavior that is not right*

1:34–1:42 cycle 10 of “Sinyur” in one *wilet*

**pasinden 2:** Ka Bojong ka Purwakarta  
*To Bojong, to Purwakarta*

Neangan jalan ka desa  
*looking for a village road*

1:42–1:51 cycle 11 of “Sinyur” in one *wilet*

Bati bengong ka panutan  
*Startled by his girlfriend*

Neangan pujaan rasa  
*looking to calm his heart*

1:51–1:59 cycle 12 of “Sinyur” in one *wilet*

Keur ngabela rumah tangga  
*To protect one's household*

Milih rabi jeung utama  
*find the right person*

1:59–2:06 cycle 13 of “Sinyur” in one *wilet*

Mungguhing jalmi utami  
*because for the best person*

Sagala kedah utama  
*everything must be right*

2:06–2:12 cycle 14 of “Sinyur” in one *wilet*

**wiraswara:** Melak saga palintangan  
*Plant the saga bush as a sign*

Babalean pangalusna  
*of the best place to sleep*

2:12–2:21 cycle 15 of “Sinyur” in one *wilet*

Sanaos dikantun ngaran  
*Although you've gone home*

- Kasaeen moal musnah  
*your goodness is not forgotten*
- 2:21–2:31 cycle 16 of “Sinyur” in one *wilet*  
**pasinden 1:** Nayaga anu nyarengan  
*Musicians playing together*
- 2:31–2:39 cycle 17 of “Sinyur” in one *wilet*  
 Sadaya ngaturkeun lagu  
*all presenting musical pieces*
- 2:39–2:49 cycle 18 of “Sinyur” in one *wilet*; dance ends, the tempo slows, and the volume drops in preparation for the *dalang*’s narration  
 Nyanggakeun tambah lumayan  
*to the best of their ability*  
 Ka sadaya kaum dangu  
*for all the spectators*
- 2:49–3:02 cycle 19 of “Sinyur” in one *wilet*  
**narration:** Raden Areada aniprek tatapa sareng puasa  
*Prince Aradea sits in meditation and fasts*
- 3:02–3:15 cycle 20 of “Sinyur” in one *wilet*  
 nyaeta nampi pancen ti guruna  
*as fulfillment of his vow to his guru*  
 Watek wantos satria gentur tapana  
*The diligent knight meditates*
- 3:15–3:34 cycle 21 in one *wilet* (slowing down to four *wilet*)
- 3:23 signal to slow down and transition to four *wilet*  
**wiraswara:** Ka Bojong ka Purwakarta  
*To Bojong, to Purwakarta*  
 Neangan jalan ka desa  
*looking for a village road*  
 Bati bengong ka pandita  
*startled by the priest*  
 Neangan pujaan rasa  
*looking to calm his heart*
- 3:31–4:13 cycle 1 of “Sinyur” in four *wilet*  
**pasinden 1:** Melak saga, dunungan, palintangan  
*Plant a saga bush as a sign*  
 Lah . . . melak saga palintangan  
*Yes, plant the saga as a sign*  
 Babalean, Pa Jajang, pangalusna  
*of the very best place to sleep*
- 4:13–4:55 cycle 2 of “Sinyur” in four *wilet*  
 Sanaos mah, Pa Anton, dikantun mulang  
*Although Mr. Anton may have gone home*

Lah . . . kasaeen moal musnah

*his goodness will not be forgotten*

Kasaeen moal musnah

*No, his goodness will not be forgotten*

4:55–5:39 cycle 3 of “Sinyur” in four *wilet*

Salajeng ka Sukapakis, Kapinis ka Sindanglaya

*To Sukapakis, Kapinis and to Sindanglaya*

Saleuheung lamun sapikir, kumaha lamun sulaya, A Dedi

*it is good to be of one mind. What about the promises you made, Dedi?*

Kumaha lamun sulaya

*What about your broken promises?*

5:39–6:22 cycle 4 of “Sinyur” in four *wilet*

Buntiris paranjang leutik, ngala hurang dikorangan

*Legumes, both long and small, take the shrimp to the pond*

Abong titis tulis diri tunggara abdi sorangan, tunggara A Dedi,  
abdi sorangan

*My fate is to suffer, Dedi, for I am all alone*

6:22–7:05 cycle 5 of “Sinyur” in four *wilet*

***pasinden 2:*** Seungit hurang tunggal seni manis rupa, Bapa Heru Suparta

*Shrimp flavor like the sweetness of the arts, Mr. Heru Suparta*

Manis rupa ranjang rupa

*Like the sweetness of sleep*

Sok hoyong mah sok hoyong tacan laksana, teu weleh mah

*Full of desire, an unrequited love*

Ari teu weleh tacan laksana

*always unrequited*

7:05–7:49 cycle 6 of “Sinyur” in four *wilet*

Srimanganti bumi asih, Bapa Sutiono

*The entrance to this beloved place, Mr. Sutiono*

Tepangan para dina latar

*Is found in the backyard*

Sangkan Gusti welas asih, dadasarna kedah sabar

*So that God will love us, we must be patient*

Dadasarna kedah sabar

*we must be patient*

7:49–8:34 cycle 7 of “Sinyur” in four *wilet*

Sangkan ku sisi laun

*Take things slowly*

Ku pamugi gamelan kedah

*Hopefully the gamelan will follow*

Ulah tanggung unggal taun geuning teundeun neang jaman

*Don't suffer alone each year, face the passing of time with a loving  
attitude*

- Bapa Endang Budi Asih  
*Mr. Endang Budi Asih*  
 Jadi teundeun neang jaman  
*Face the passing of time*
- 8:34–9:20 cycle 8 of “Sinyur” in four *wilet*  
 Da pamadeg lampah jalan  
*Of one mind and one pathway*  
 Iwal ti bangsa sorangan  
*Except among one’s own people*  
 Cinta kana kabudayaan sami cinta kabangsaan, Bapa Sunaryo  
*Love your culture and your people, Mr. Sunaryo*  
 Sami cinta kabangsaan  
*Yes, love your people*
- 9:17 cue from *dalang*’s *campala* just before the gong stroke to signal  
*wilet* change and end
- 9:19 *campala* and drums lead the gamelan from four *wilet* to two *wilet*
- 9:20–9:40 penultimate gong phrase; gamelan speeds up to transition from  
 four *wilet* to two *wilet*
- 9:40–9:55 final gong phrase in two *wilet*
- 9:51 *campala* and drum signal to end at the next gong stroke
- 9:55 *Kakawen Pondok* “Nurcahaya,” laras sorog/salendro  
*dalang* Nur cahaya sesekarning wang cahaya gilang gumilan  
*A ray of light, bright and brilliant*  
 Cahaya gilang gumilang, gumilang. Lawan . . .  
*Radiance bright and brilliant and . . .*

## TRACK 8

*Music culture:* Sundanese

*Genre:* Degung

*Piece title:* “Ujung Laut/Sinyur”

*Performers:* Pusaka Sunda (Burhan Sukarma, director; Undang Sumarna, *gendang*)

*Source:* *Lolongkrang* (track 7) produced by Sakti Productions (1994).

Burhan Sukarma’s *suling* style for *tembang Sunda*, *kacapi-suling*, and *degung* set the standard for Sundanese *suling* playing in the 1970s and 1980s; he became particularly famous for his soaring and soulful improvisations. Since moving to the United States in the late 1980s, Burhan has led a group of American musicians called Pusaka Sunda (“Sundanese heirloom”) in playing both traditional pieces and Burhan’s own new compositions (the author is among those Americans performing in Pusaka Sunda).

“Ujung Laut” is a *lagu klasik* piece from the early days of *degung* at the beginning of the 20th century; its composition is often attributed to *degung* pioneer Idi. Its phrase structure and style are discussed in some detail in Chapter Three. The various bronze instruments play the melody together, each with its own particular idiom, to create a texture of simultaneous variations. The *suling* player provides a particularly florid version of the melody. The drumming style is austere and simple, featuring only a few simple strokes performed with a padded stick.

In current *degung* practice it is common to follow a *lagu klasik* piece with a *panambih*—an “extra” song. In this selection, the second piece is “Sinyur.” In theory, it is the same “Sinyur” as that discussed in Chapter Three; its sound, however, is quite different because it is performed in the *degung* tuning instead of in *salendro*. Pusaka Sunda’s rendition is instrumental, but the *panambih* also might feature a solo singer or a group of singers. In *panambih* style, most of the instruments improvise parts based on the pillar pitches of “Sinyur”; this rendition features the addition of fast interlocking *saron* parts to fill out the texture.

### *Timeline for “Ujung Laut/Sinyur”*

0:00 *pangkat* (played on the *bonang*)

0:11–2:08 first iteration of “Ujung Laut”

0:11–0:40 Phrase 1

0:40–1:15 Phrase 2

1:15–2:08 Phrase 3

2:08–4:02 second iteration of “Ujung Laut”

2:08–2:37 Phrase 1

2:37–3:10 Phrase 2

3:10–4:02 Phrase 3

4:02–4:33 Third (incomplete) iteration including Phrase 1 only

4:23 drummer switches to *tepak melem* (restrained hand drumming) and signals a transition to “Sinyur”

4:33–5:19 First complete iteration of “Sinyur”

4:33–4:56 first gong phrase of “Sinyur”

4:56–5:19 second gong phrase of “Sinyur”

5:19–7:29 three more iterations of “Sinyur” (for a total of four)

7:16 drum signal to end

## TRACK 9

*Music culture:* Sundanese

*Genre:* *Ketuk tilu*

*Piece title:* “Sinur”

*Performers:* Candra Puspita: Samin (*wiraswara* [male singer] and director); Arliani (*juru kawih* [female singer]); Lili Suparli (*rebab*); Tosin Muchtar (*gendang*); Dedy S. Hadianda (*goong* and *ketuk*).

*Source:* *Celempungan and Ketuk Tilu: Candra Puspita*, produced by Florence Bodo and Dedy S. Hadianda (n.d.).

This example, “Sinur” (n.b. not to be confused with “Sinyur” in tracks 7 and 8), was performed for a recording session by some well-known Bandung musicians who are more famous for their work in other genres. The late Samin was renowned as *wiraswara* (male singer) for all sorts of genres and as a repository of knowledge about obscure musical genres; the late Tosin Muchtar’s tasteful *gendang* playing can be heard on literally hundreds of commercial recordings; Lili Suparli and Arliani are staff musicians for the Bandung branch of the government-sponsored college-level school of performing arts (Sekolah Tinggi Seni Indonesia [STSI]). Samin and Tosin were once associated with the Bandung branch of the Indonesian national radio station, Radio Republik Indonesia (RRI), where they revived some of the *ketuk tilu* repertory for broadcast, learning the ins and outs of the pieces from older musicians then on the staff. Although this performance was not made for dance accompaniment, the music was played as if there were dancers present.

A *ketuk tilu* ensemble provides all four layers of a gamelan-like musical texture with very few instruments: a three-pot gong chime and a gong provide a colotomic foundation; a *rebab* player and singers provide a basic melody and elaborations; a *gendang* player provides the drumming.

Each of the gong chime’s three pots has a different pitch; the actual pitches vary somewhat from ensemble to ensemble, but there always is a lower-pitched pot, a higher-pitched pot, with the third pot’s pitch falling somewhere in between (i.e., a medium-pitched pot). One musician plays all three pots; the most typical pattern is the following (M=medium, L=low, H=high, and <rest>=no stroke):

M L M H M L M <rest>

This eight-pulse pattern (with the accent falling on the rest at the end of the pattern) serves as a kind of holding pattern that outlines the basic rhythmic unit for most *ketuk tilu* songs. In the course of performance, however, the

*ketuk* player frequently varies the pattern both rhythmically and with regard to pitch.

The cycle of the song “Sinur” includes two main phrases: the first phrase consists of eight of the eight-pulse units, with a stroke of the *goong* falling on the rest of the final unit; the second lasts four eight-pulse units, again with a *goong* stroke falling on the fourth unit’s ending rest. There is an optional *goong* stroke in the middle of the second phrase, that is, on the final pulse of the second unit.

The colotomic phrase structure is notated below; each of the eight-pulse units is represented with the symbol “-”; an eight-pulse unit that ends with a gong stroke is represented with “-g”; an eight-pulse unit that sometimes ends with a gong stroke is represented -[g].

-----g  
--[g] -g

Because its phrase lengths are unequal, the cycle of “Sinur” has something of an asymmetrical character; in this sense, *ketuk tilu* phrases are comparable to *degung lagu klasik* tunes.

For the first six units of the first phrase, the drummer plays one of several repeating patterns; the dancers move in a way that looks and feels to them the way drum pattern sounds, choosing different foot, arm, hand, and head gestures to mimic the drumming. For the last two units, the drummer plays a special cadential pattern that leads up to the gong stroke; it is typical for these patterns to stop with a dramatic accent just before the gong stroke. The *ketuk* player usually deviates from the usual ostinato during these cadential patterns to enhance the drumming’s drive toward the gong stroke.

For the second phrase, the drummer plays one of several more complicated, less repetitive patterns. For these patterns, the *ketuk* player follows the drumming’s rhythm, and, again, the dancers perform gestures that look like the patterns sounds, paying special attention to where the gong strokes fall.

There are *ketuk tilu* songs in most of the Sundanese scales and modes, including *sorog* and *salendro* (see Chapter Three). Because the accompanying instruments are not tuned to any particular scale, the ensemble can quite easily accompany any Sundanese mode. The vocal melody of “Sinur” (also played on the *rebab*) is cast in *pelog degung*. The melody occupies an entire cycle, encompassing both the long and the short phrase. In this performance, the female singer performs two cycles in a row, then lets the *wiraswara* (male singer) take a cycle, creating a “metacycle” three cycles long. The metacycle is repeated four times.

For each cycle of “Sinur,” the singers utilize a single verse in a poetic form called *paparikan*; *paparikan* is one of several poetic forms collectively known as

*sisindiran*. A verse of *paparikan* consists of two couplets; the first lines of the two couplets rhyme, as do the second lines of the two couplets. The first couplet is the *cangkang* (“shell” or “rind”), and the second couplet is the *eusi* (“filling” or “content”). Generally, the shell’s content has little to do with the content’s meaning. Because the melody has more than four melodic phrases, the singers often repeat one of the couplets to fill out the tune.

There is no specific theme that ties all of the *paparikan* together in this performance of “Sinur”; most of the *paparikan* provide advice on proper Sundanese values and behavior. Some of these *paparikan* verses are well-known among Sundanese. The transcription and translation of these *paparikan* verses was provided by Tati Haryatin, who warns readers that because of the hidden meanings and complex allusions in these verses, it is not always possible to translate them into another language; her goal in these translations was to give a sense of what the verses are trying to convey.

As is typical for a *ketuk tilu* song, this rendition of “Sinur” begins and ends with a special drum and *ketuk* pattern called *nyered*. Dancers stand still during *nyered* and prepare to begin or end their dancing appropriately. In many cases (but not in this rendition) the *nyered* would serve as a transition to another *ketuk tilu* song, which would accompany the all-male *oray-orayan* dance.

### *Timeline for “Sinur”*

0:00 *pangkat* from the *rebab*, drums join in

0:06 first *goong* stroke

0:06–0:17 *nyered*

0:17–0:25 transitional phrase

0:25–2:26 first “metacycle”

0:25–1:08 first cycle sung by female singer

0:25–0:55 first phrase

***pasinden:*** Harepan mah geuningan kembang ermawar

*I am hoping for roses*

pacampur mah jeung kaca piring

*mixed with gardenias*

Sumeblak loba kakelar

*My heart is sick with worry*

tagiwur mah Bapa teu ngeunah cicing

*tossing and turning uncertainty*

0:55–1:08 second phrase (with an “optional” gong stroke at 1:01)

Kembang wera geuningan da daun turi

*Hibiscuses and sesbanias*

hayang leuleuweungan bae



*always grow in the forest*

1:08–1:48 second cycle sung by female singer

***pasinden:*** Lamun teu era, era, era ku diri

*If I'm not ashamed of myself*

***wiraswara:*** (spoken) Rek kumaha karep teh, Nyi?

*What are you going to do, Miss?*

***pasinden:*** hayang reureujeungan bae

*I want always to be together (with my love)*

Lamun teu era ku diri

*If I'm not ashamed of myself*

hayang reureujeungan bae

*I want always to be together*

1:48–2:26 cycle sung by male singer

***wiraswara:*** Manuk piit jeung kapinis

*Sparrows and swallows*

di lebak keur nyaratuan

*feeding down below*

Sapapait samamanis

*Together for better or worse*

nu disebut persatuan

*that's what's called unity*

2:26–4:14 second “metacycle”

***pasinden:*** Japati mah geuningan da ti Situ Aksan

*Doves from Situ Aksan*

sukuna kenging mulasan

*their feet painted*

Babakti ku kamonesan

*We are devoting ourselves*

seni Sunda ieung da ngadeuheusan

*to preserve Sundanese art*

Surawung mah geuningan sarana pahang

*Basil is pungent*

gedangna mah geuningan dipiringan

*as papayas are on a plate*

Mun aya nu salah, salah paham

*If there are misunderstandings*

ku urang mah bapa kudu elingan

*we have to correct one another*

***wiraswara:*** Mawa peti dina sumbul

*Carrying a box in a basket*

dibawa ka Nusa Jawa

*carrying it to Java*

Pangarti mah teu beurat ngandung  
*Knowledge is not just something you carry around*  
 kabisa teu beurat mawa  
*and the ability to do anything is useful*

4:14–5:51 third “metacycle”

**pasinden:** Kulah di pipir pipir ti dapur  
*Small pond behind the kitchen*  
 dipelakan lalasunan  
*planted with a hedge*  
 Ulah sok raresep nganggur  
*Don't you sit around doing nothing*  
 matak nungtun ieuh da lalamunan  
*as it leads you uncertain musings*  
 Halimun mah geuningan aya di imah  
*A thin mist comes down around the house*  
 ulah di kana batukeun  
*don't let it touch the stones*  
 Lamun aya nu teu ngeunah  
*If there is anything unpleasant*  
 ulah osok geuningan dikabaturkeun  
*don't give it to someone else*

**wiraswara:** Motongkeun dahan kanyere  
*Breaking off a branch of berries*  
 dadago rek moro subuh  
*waiting for the break of dawn*  
 Tembongkeun ahlak nu sae  
*Show everyone good conduct*  
 dina jero hirup kumbuh  
*in living your life*

5:51–7:15 fourth “metacycle”

**pasinden:** Itu saha geuningan da nungtun munding  
*Who is it leading a buffalo by a rope?*

**wiraswara:** (spoken) mana nyai?  
*where, Miss?*

**pasinden:** digantelan saputangan  
*with a handkerchief about the neck*  
 Itu saha ginding-ginding teuing  
*Who is it all dressed up*  
 sing horeng mah ieung batur sorangan  
*it turned out to be a friend of mine*

**wiraswara:** (spoken) Tobat . . .  
*Mercy . . .*

**pasinden:** Rek rancana geuningan da meser meser madu  
*Planning to go and buy some honey*  
 dilogoder kikinciran  
*but I have so many things to do*  
 Sadayana ulah bendu  
*Please everyone don't be angry*  
 ngan sakadar geuning da sisindiran  
*it's only a sisindiran*

**wiraswara:** Sing getol nginum jajamu  
*Drink jamu (traditional medicinal concoctions) frequently*  
 ambeh jadi kuat urat  
*so you'll be strong and healthy*  
 Sing getol neangan ilmu  
*Learn anything industriously*  
 gunana dunya aherat  
*it will come handy sometime*

7:15–7:24 *nyered* to end

**wiraswara:** (spoken) Mundur, mundur, mundur!  
*Back off!*

#### TRACK 10

*Music culture:* Sundanese

*Genre:* gamelan *salendro* to accompany *jaipongan* dance entitled  
 “Renggasmara”

*Piece title:* “Lindeuk Japati”

*Composer:* Nano S. (a.k.a. Nano Suratno, b. 1944)

*Performers:* Tati Saleh, accompanied by LS Gentra Madya (directed by Nano S.)

*Source:* *Top Jaipong: Lindeuk Japati*, track 1, SP Record.

The noted Sundanese composer Nano S. wrote “Lindeuk Japati” in 1986; although he is better known for his pop Sunda hits, Nano’s foray into *jaipongan* achieved considerable success in the 1980s and continues to sell well into the present. Nano S. engaged the most famous *jaipongan* drummer of the time, Suwanda from Karawang (who also played on most of Jugala’s most successful recordings), to play the *gendang* on the recording. Nano also collaborated with the prominent Bandung-based singer and dancer Tati Saleh for the recording as well; she provided the choreography (entitled “Renggasmara”) for the piece.

The background of the song is a basic *patokan* piece called “Banjaran,” whose pillar pitches can be notated:

1 (2) 1 (4)

Like most *jaipongan* songs, the *patokan* is performed in two *wilet*, and each of the instrumentalists fills out the pillar pitches by inserting *pancer* tones and plays appropriate idiomatic figurations based on the pillar pitches to create his or her part.

Nano composed the song's melody to fit into the tonal framework provided by "Banjaran." As is typical for *jaipongan* tunes, the piece opens with a fast introductory section, which features a careful arrangement (*arensemen*) of instrumental parts that show off the individual instrumentalist's dexterity as well as the ensemble's skill at playing together. After the fast introduction, the tempo slows down to a speed that is appropriate for *jaipongan* dancing. The entire composition (the "metacycle") of the main section takes six iterations of the two-gong-phrase cycle of "Banjaran" to complete; four of the iterations feature Tati Saleh singing the official text of the song (see Figure 4.14 for the song text and translation); the remaining two cycles feature the extemporized singing of a *wiraswara* (male singer; on this recording, Atang Warsita). The entire melody is cast in the *sorog* tuning system, which clashes euphoniously with the gamelan's *salendro* tuning system.

The drumming is meant to accompany a specific dance choreography, created by Tati Saleh, entitled "Rengasmara." Like all *jaipongan* recordings, however, other dancers feel free to improvise or rehearse their own movements according to the drumming. The timeline below provides a phrase-by-phrase accounting of the choreography using the terms introduced in Chapter Four for the various types of *jaipongan* drum/dance phrases: *pola ibing* (the standard pattern that features five flurries of drumming activity with silence in between), *mincid* (continuous walking pattern), and alternating patterns (which involve special phrases repeated several times within a single gong phrase). The choreography requires two and a half metacycles to complete.

Careful listeners will notice that the *kempul* player's part is quite lively and animated (in stark contrast to that instrument's typically static, sparse idiom as a colotomic instrument). For *jaipongan* accompaniments it is common for the *kempul* player to follow the drumming; he plays particular patterns for each drum flurry in the *pola ibing* as well as a frenetic syncopated pattern for *mincid*. This ensemble also features a *kecrek* player who, for the most part, follows and reinforces the *gendang* parts.

### ***Timeline for "Lindeuk Japati"***

0:00 fast introduction: *ketuk tilu*-like opening leading to first gong stroke at  
0:08

- 0:08–0:40 first Banjaran gong phrase with *arensemen* ends with gong 2  
 0:40–1:11 second *arensemen* phrase ends with gong 4  
 1:11–1:25 transition phrase (ends with gong 4)
- 1:25–4:17 First “metacycle” (female singer goes through song, plus answer from *wiraswara*)  
 1:25–1:52 first gong phrase of song; drummer plays holding pattern  
 1:52–2:20 second gong phrase of song; drummer plays partial standard pattern  
     2:02 *jalak pengkor*  
     2:08 *capang*  
     2:14 *cindek*  
     2:17 *ngala genah*  
 2:20–2:48 third gong phrase of song; drummer plays complete standard pattern  
     2:24 *bukaan*  
     2:31 *jalak pengkor*  
     2:35 *capang*  
     2:42 *cindek*  
     2:45 *ngala genah*  
 2:48–3:18 fourth gong phrase; drummer plays an alternating pattern  
 3:18–3:48 fifth gong phrase (sung by *wiraswara*); drummer plays standard pattern  
 3:48–4:17 sixth gong phrase (sung by *wiraswara*); drummer plays an alternating pattern
- 4:17–7:10 Second metacycle  
 4:17–4:46 drummer plays standard pattern in which *bukaan* and *jalak pengkor* are slightly varied  
 4:46–5:14 drummer plays varied version of standard pattern again, this time with a variation of *capang* that slides directly into *cindek*  
 5:14–5:43 drummer plays *mincid*  
     5:18 drum transition to *mincid*  
     5:21 *mincid* begins  
 5:43–6:13 *mincid* continues  
 6:13–6:42 fourth gong phrase (sung by *wiraswara*); drummer plays a variation of the standard pattern  
 6:42–7:10 fifth gong phrase (sung by *wiraswara*); drummer plays a variation of the standard pattern
- 7:10–Third (incomplete) metacycle  
 7:10–7:42 first gong phrase of song; drummer plays standard pattern

7:42–8:06 second gong phrase of song; drummer plays standard pattern

8:06–8:36 third gong phrase of song; drummer plays *mincid rangkep* and signals piece's ending

8:10 transition to *mincid*

8:13 *mincid* begins

8:27 ending signal begins



# Appendix:

## *Ensemble Instrumentation*

The following lists summarize the instrumentation of the various ensembles discussed in the text.

### **Gondang sabangunan** (*Toba Batak, Sumatra; see Chapter One*)

<i>taganing</i>	a set of five tuned drums
<i>gordang</i>	large drum
<i>odap</i>	large drum
<i>ogung</i>	gong chime with four suspended gongs
<i>hesek</i>	rattle
<i>sarune</i>	double-reed wind instrument

### **Pinn peat** (*Cambodia; see Chapter One*)

<i>sralai</i>	double-reed wind instruments (ensemble includes two of different sizes)
<i>roneat ek</i>	xylophone
<i>roneat thung</i>	xylophone
<i>roneat dek</i>	keyed metallophone
<i>korng tauch</i>	circular gong chime
<i>korng thomm</i>	circular gong chime
<i>chhing</i>	pair of small cymbals
<i>skor thomm</i>	drum
<i>sampho</i>	drum
vocalists	

### **Pi phat** (*Thai gong-chime ensemble; see Chapter One*)

<i>pi</i>	double-reed wind instrument
<i>ranat</i>	xylophones
<i>khawng</i>	gong chimes
<i>ching</i>	cymbals
<i>taphon</i>	drums



**Maguindanao kulintang** (*southern Philippines gong-chime ensemble; see Chapter One*)

<i>agung</i>	pair of hanging gongs with deep flanges
<i>gandingan</i>	set of four hanging gongs called <i>gandingan</i>
<i>babandil</i>	single hanging gong
<i>dabakan</i>	goblet-shaped drum

**Gamelan sekaten** (*Cirebonese; see Chapter One*)

<i>gong</i>	large hanging gongs (two)
<i>bonang</i>	large one-row gong chime
<i>ketuk</i> or <i>kajar</i>	small, horizontal gong
<i>demung</i>	larger, lower-pitched keyed metallophones
<i>titil</i>	smaller, higher-pitched keyed metallophone
<i>beri, cret, or kecrek</i>	flat, unbossed gong
<i>bedug</i>	large drum

**Central Javanese court-style gamelan** (*see Chapter Two*)

<i>gong ageng</i>	extremely large hanging gong
<i>gong siyem</i> (or <i>gong suwukan</i> )	hanging gong (smaller than <i>gong ageng</i> )
<i>kenong</i>	horizontal gong chime
<i>ketuk</i>	small horizontal gong
<i>kempyang</i>	small, high-pitched <i>ketuk</i> -like gong, or a pair of such little gongs
<i>kempul</i>	gong chime consisting of several small hanging gongs
<i>saron</i>	generic term for a “family” of six- or seven-keyed metallophones
<i>saron demung</i>	lowest-pitched member of the <i>saron</i> family
<i>saron barung</i>	medium-pitched member of the <i>saron</i> family
<i>saron panerus</i> (or <i>peking</i> )	highest-pitched member of the <i>saron</i> family
<i>bonang</i>	generic term for a family of horizontal gong chimes with ten to fourteen pots arranged in two rows
<i>bonang barung</i>	lower-pitched horizontal gong chime
<i>bonang panerus</i>	higher-pitched horizontal gong chime
<i>gender</i>	generic term for a “family” of keyed instruments with thin keys suspended over resonating tubes
<i>slenthem</i>	lowest-pitched member of the <i>gender</i> family, with six to eight keys
<i>gender barung</i>	medium-pitched member of the <i>gender</i> family, with fourteen keys
<i>gender panerus</i>	highest-pitched member of the <i>gender</i> family, with fourteen keys

<i>gerong</i>	male chorus
<i>pesindhen</i>	female vocalist
<i>rebab</i>	two-string fiddle
<i>suling</i>	vertical bamboo flute with four ( <i>slendro</i> ) or five ( <i>pelog</i> ) holes
<i>gambang</i>	xylophone with nineteen or twenty wooden keys
<i>celempung</i> (or <i>siter</i> )	zither with metal strings
<i>bedug</i>	large barrel-shaped drum with skin heads attached at each end with large wooden pegs
<i>kendhang</i>	two-headed barrel-shaped drums with heads secured with rawhide laces
<i>kendhang gending</i>	large <i>kendhang</i>
<i>ketipung</i>	small <i>kendhang</i>
<i>kendhang kalih</i>	“two drums”—combination of <i>kendhang gending</i> and <i>ketipung</i>
<i>ciblon</i> (or <i>batangan</i> )	medium-sized <i>kendhang</i> -style drum

**Gandrung ensemble (eastern Java, Osing; see Chapter Two)**

	various gongs and gong chimes
	pair of violins
<i>kluncing</i>	metal triangle

**Gong luang (Bali; see Chapter Two)**

<i>saron</i>	bar metallophone (2)
<i>gangsra</i>	gender-family metallophone (2)
<i>trompong</i>	large gong chime played by several musicians
<i>gong ageng</i>	large hanging gong
<i>cengceng</i>	cymbals
<i>bedug</i>	small drum

**Gamelan gong beleganjur (Bali; see Chapter Two)**

<i>cengceng</i>	cymbals
<i>reyong</i>	four small, hand-held gongs, each played by a different musician
<i>ponggang</i>	two medium-sized hand-held gongs, two players
<i>kajar</i> (or <i>kempluk</i> )	medium-sized hand-held gong
<i>kempli</i>	similar to <i>kajar</i>
<i>bende</i>	large hanging gong with a sunken boss
<i>kempur</i>	large hanging gong
<i>gong lanang</i>	“male” large hanging gong (smaller than <i>gong wadon</i> )

<i>gong wadon</i>	“female” large hanging gong (larger than <i>gong lanang</i> )
<i>kendang lanang</i>	“male” drum (lighter, higher-pitched)
<i>kendang wadon</i>	“female” drum (heavier, lower-pitched)

**Gamelan gong kebyar** (*Bali; see Chapter Two*)

<i>gong ageng</i>	large hanging gong
<i>kempur</i>	smaller hanging gong
<i>kemong</i>	tiny hanging gong
<i>kempli</i>	small gong laid horizontally on a frame
<i>jegogan</i>	lowest-pitched <i>gender</i> -family instrument
<i>calung</i>	second-lowest-pitched <i>gender</i> -family instrument
<i>gangsaa</i>	family of <i>gender</i> with multiple octaves of keys
<i>ugal</i>	lead <i>gangsaa</i>
<i>pemade</i>	<i>gangsaa</i> one octave higher than <i>ugal</i>
<i>kantilan</i>	<i>gangsaa</i> one octave higher than <i>pemade</i>
<i>trompong</i>	lower-pitched one row gong chime played by one musician
<i>reyong</i>	higher-pitched one-row gong chime played by four musicians
<i>cengceng</i>	set of six or more cymbals played by a single player

**Goong renteng** (*Sundanese; see Chapter Three*)

<i>goong</i>	large gong (two)
<i>gangsaa</i> (or <i>selukat</i> )	saron-like instrument with many keys
<i>beri</i>	non-bossed gong
<i>bonang</i> (or <i>koromong</i> , or <i>kokuang</i> , or <i>renteng</i> )	large, one-row gong chime
<i>cecempres</i>	<i>saron</i> -like instrument
<i>panglima</i>	large gong chime
<i>tarompet</i>	double-reed wind instrument

**Gamelan salendro** (*Sundanese; see Chapter Three*)

<i>goong</i>	large gong
<i>kempul</i>	smaller gong suspended from the same frame as <i>goong</i>
<i>saron</i>	six- or seven-keyed metallophone (2)
<i>panerus</i>	six- or seven-keyed metallophone, one octave lower than <i>saron</i>
<i>bonang</i>	horizontal gong chime with ten to fourteen small knobbed gongs
<i>gambang</i>	xylophone with 18 to 21 wooden keys

<i>gendang</i>	set of two-head, barrel-shaped drums.
<i>rebab</i>	spike fiddle with two brass strings and a skin-covered resonator
<i>pasinden</i>	female vocalist
<i>kenong</i>	horizontal gong chime with one to six large, high-pitched gongs
<i>jengglong</i>	horizontal gong chime with three to six gongs, flatter and tuned an octave lower than <i>kenong</i>
<i>peking</i>	metallophone similar to <i>saron</i> but tuned an octave higher
<i>rincik</i>	gong chime similar to <i>bonang</i> but tuned an octave higher
<i>kecrek</i>	stack of iron plates hit with a wooden hammer
<i>ketuk</i>	small gong laid horizontally and hit with a padded stick

**Kendang penca** (*Sundanese ensemble to accompany penca silat martial arts; see Chapter Three*)

<i>kendang</i>	set of drums (two)
<i>tarompet</i>	double-reed wind instrument
<i>goong</i>	small hanging gong

**Degung** (*Sundanese; see Chapter Three*)

<i>bonang</i>	fourteen-pot horizontal gong chime arranged in one row on a V- or U-shaped frame
<i>panerus</i>	fourteen-key metallophone (also called <i>demung</i> )
<i>titil</i>	fourteen-key metallophone (also called <i>peking</i> or <i>cempres</i> )
<i>goong</i>	large hanging gong
<i>jengglong</i>	gong chime with six low-pitched gongs, suspended vertically or arranged horizontally
<i>suling</i>	four-hole bamboo flute
<i>gendang</i>	set of two-headed barrel-shaped drums

**Reog or ogel ensemble** (*Sundanese; see Chapter Four*)

<i>tilingtit</i>	smallest <i>dog-dog</i> in a <i>reog</i> ensemble
<i>panempag</i>	second-smallest <i>dog-dog</i> in a <i>reog</i> ensemble
<i>jongjrong</i>	second-largest <i>dog-dog</i> in a <i>reog</i> ensemble
<i>bangbrang</i>	largest <i>dog-dog</i> in a <i>reog</i> ensemble

**Ketuk tilu** (*Sundanese; see Chapter Four*)

<i>goong</i>	large hanging gong
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*ketuk*gong chime with three *ketuk**gendang*

set of two-head, barrel-shaped drums.

*rebab*

spike fiddle with two brass strings and a skin-covered resonator

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